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सप्रेम भेंट

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CALENDAR FOR 1946

JANUARY

S.	...	...	6	13	20	27
M.	...	...	7	14	21	28
T.	...	1	8	15	22	29
W.	...	2	9	16	23	30
Th.	...	3	10	17	24	31
F.	...	4	11	18	25	...
S.	...	5	12	19	26	...

FEBRUARY

S.	...	3	10	17	24	...
M.	...	4	11	18	25	...
T.	...	5	12	19	26	...
W.	...	6	13	20	27	...
Th.	...	7	14	21	28	...
F.	1	8	15	22	...	...
S.	2	9	16	23	...	...

MARCH

S.	...	3	10	17	24	31
M.	...	4	11	18	25	...
T.	...	5	12	19	26	...
W.	...	6	13	20	27	...
Th	...	7	14	21	28	...
F.	1	8	15	22	29	...
S.	2	9	16	23	30	...

APRIL

S.	...	7	14	21	28	...
M.	1	8	15	22	29	...
T.	2	9	16	23	30	...
W.	3	10	17	24	...	...
Th.	4	11	18	25	...	...
F.	5	12	19	26	...	...
S.	6	13	20	27	...	...

MAY

S.	...	5	12	19	26	...
M.	...	6	13	20	27	...
T.	...	7	14	21	28	...
W.	1	8	15	22	29	...
Th.	2	9	16	23	30	...
F.	3	10	17	24	31	...
S.	4	11	18	25	...	...

JUNE

S.	...	2	9	16	23	30
M.	...	3	10	17	24	...
T.	...	4	11	18	25	...
W.	...	5	12	19	26	...
Th	...	6	13	20	27	...
F.	...	7	14	21	28	...
S.	1	8	15	22	29	...

JULY

S.	...	7	14	21	28	...
M.	1	8	15	22	29	...
T.	2	9	16	23	30	...
W.	3	10	17	24	31	...
Th	4	11	18	25	...	...
F.	5	12	19	26	...	...
S.	6	13	20	27	...	...

AUGUST

S.	...	4	11	18	25	...
M.	...	5	12	19	26	...
T.	...	6	13	20	27	...
W.	...	7	14	21	28	...
Th	1	8	15	22	29	...
F.	2	9	16	23	30	...
S.	3	10	17	24	31	...

SEPTEMBER

S.	1	8	15	22	29	...
M.	2	9	16	23	30	...
T.	3	10	17	24	...	...
W.	4	11	18	25	...	...
Th.	5	12	19	26	...	...
F.	6	13	20	27	...	...
S	7	14	21	28	...	...

OCTOBER

S.	...	6	13	20	27	...
M.	...	7	14	21	28	...
T.	1	8	15	22	29	...
W.	2	9	16	23	30	...
Th	3	10	17	24	31	...
F.	4	11	18	25	...	...
S.	5	12	19	26	...	...

NOVEMBER

S.	...	3	10	17	24	...
M.	...	4	11	18	25	...
T.	...	5	12	19	26	...
W.	...	6	13	20	27	...
Th.	...	7	14	21	28	...
F.	1	8	15	22	29	...
S.	2	9	16	23	30	...

DECEMBER

S.	1	8	15	22	29	...
M.	2	9	16	23	30	...
T.	3	10	17	24	31	...
W.	4	11	18	25	...	...
Th	5	12	19	26	...	...
F.	6	13	20	27	...	...
S.	7	14	21	28	...	...

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ANNUAL REGISTER
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Chronicle of Events

JULY—DECEMBER 1946

AND

India in Home Polity

1

Chronicle of Events

July 1946

Communal disturbances broke out in Ahmedabad city.

H. E. the Viceroy accepted the resignations of all the members of his Executive Council.

Lower grade postal staff in Calcutta decided to launch a general strike from July 11.

The new members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were sworn in.

Newly elected A. I. C C. met at Bombay under the presidentship of Pt. Jawharlal Nehru. Two resolutions were passed.

Pt. Nehru officially announced the names of members of the new Congress Working Committee.

The Standing Committee of the All India States' People's Conference met at Congress House, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru presiding.

The Sikhs unanimously decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly.

The unofficial U. S Famine Commission completed its tour of India.

The strike by the Postal employees commenced in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and other centres.

The Government of Sind prorogued the Sind Legislative Assembly.

The eight Sikh nominees to the Constituent Assembly withdrew their nominations.

Followers of Scheduled Castes Federation in Bombay staged a "non-violent satyagraha" in Poona.

The debate on India commenced both in the House of Commons and House of Lords.

The Govt. of India accepted in their entirety the Adjudicators award for relief to lower grade staff of the Post & Telegraphs Dept.

The general strike in all postal departments in Calcutta commenced.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and party arrived in Srinagar.

A joint appeal for funds for the relief of I. N. A. personnel was issued by Pt. Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Working Committee of the All India Muslim League held a four-hour session without passing any resolution.

The Standing Committee of the A. I. Women's Conference met in Calcutta.

The Muslim League rejected the Cabinet Mission's proposals and decided to resort to Direct Action for the achievement of Pakistan.

Calcutta observed complete "hartal" in sympathy with postal strike.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Arthur Henderson outlined the food position in India.

Pandit Nehru discussed with the Viceroy the situation arising from the League's rejection of Cabinet Mission's proposals.

The Muslim League Working Committee fixed August 16 for observance of the "Direct Action" day throughout India.

1st. Mr. Krishna Prasad, Director General, Post & Telegraphs stated at a Press Conference that the strike notice served by the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union was illegal since some of the postmen's demands had already been referred to adjudication.

The unofficial American Famine Mission sponsored by the Indian Famine Emergency Committee in U. S. A. arrived in Calcutta to-day and had a discussion with the Chief Minister on the general food situation.

As a result of communal disturbances which broke out to-day in Ahmedabad city, 23 persons were killed and 160 injured.

Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, Indian Agent-General in Washington, speaking at the New Delhi Branch of the India Council of World Affairs, said that the war had made the U. S. A. "India conscious" and pointed out the feeling of genuine sympathy and support prevalent throughout the U. S. A. for the national aspiration of India.

In an address at the annual general meeting of the Bombay branch of the Anglo-Indian Association, Mr. B. G. Kher, Prime Minister of Bombay assured the Anglo-Indians that if they looked upon the country as their own, India would never disown them.

Amongst the list of Muslim League candidates selected by the Central Parliamentary Board for elections to the Constituent Assembly were Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Begum Shah Nawaz and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar from the Punjab, and Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, Hon. H. S. Suhrawardy, Sir Nazimuddin and Sir Azizul Haque from Bengal.

2nd. Further recrudescence of communal rioting in Ahmedabad resulted in 33 persons being killed and over 250 injured. Curfew was imposed on the most affected areas of the city.

The Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethic-Lawrence on his departure from India, told Reuter's political correspondent, "I think we have done a piece of work in India that will be of great value, and will prove of greater value as time goes on"

Mr S. K. Chatterjee, Director-General of Food, said to-day that Bengal will procure 9000 tons of rice from Burma this month. He added that this was the first of the allotments made to Bengal by the Govt. of India.

Major-General Arnold, Regional Food Commissioner, Govt. of India, expressed the view that the lack of adequate shipping space or wagons was not the only contributory factor to the food shortage in India, but that the vital cause of it was the slow progress in procurement of food grains from the producers.

The independent "*Times*" to-day appealed to the Indian Congress Party to end the deadlock and urged that by exercising the right to name representatives in the Interim Govt. but refraining from exercising the right to nominate a Congress Muslim on this occasion, they can preserve their country from civil strife and hasten the advance towards independence.

Mr. S. Guruswami, General Secretary, All India Railwaymen's Federation announced that the Advisory Committee of the Federation will meet on July 7 at Bombay.

President Truman signed the Indian Immigration Bill, under terms of which 75 "Eastern Hemisphere Indians" will be permitted to enter the U. S. every year.

3rd. One man was killed and seven others injured as the result of a police firing in the Bikaner state.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, President-elect of the Indian National Congress on his arrival at Bombay was accorded a tumultuous ovation by about 50,000 people.

The Viceroy accepted the resignations of all the members of his Executive Council on the eve of the formation of the new Care-taker Government.

The decision to launch a general strike from July 11, in pursuance of the resolution of the All-India Postmen & Lower Grade Staff Union passed at the Poona Conference, unless the Government accepted their demands in the mean-time, was taken at a crowded meeting of the lower grade postal staff of Calcutta to-day.

On the eve of his retirement, Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, in a statement reviewed the food position up to date and, in describing the efforts made to meet it, emphasised on the need for more supplies for the current year.

The Working Committee of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee at its meeting at Congress House discussed matters relating to the election of members from Assam to the Constituent Assembly.

4th. New members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were sworn in to-day; H. E. the Viceroy presided. It was decided to hold the next meeting on July 10.

The Bombay Municipal Corporation adjourned as a mark of protest against the treatment meted out by the Govt. of South Africa to Indian passive resisters there.

Mr. D. Thackersey, Chairman of the Textile Control Board, at a meeting of the Board at Bombay announced the enhancement in the ceiling prices of cotton textiles and yarn, which was to take place from August 1 this year.

At a meeting of the Bath Labour Party, Prof. Harold Laski congratulated the Govt. on their intention to accord free relationship between India and Britain.

There were fresh communal trouble in Dacca to-day. Five men were stabbed, two of them fatally.

Sir Azizul Haque, Commerce Member of the Govt. of India, was nominated as a candidate for the Bengal Legislative Council by the Bengal Muslim League Parliamentary Board.

5th. The European party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly decided to abstain from voting in the forthcoming elections to the Constituent Assembly. This decision was conveyed to Mr. Kiran Shankar Roy, Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party by the secretary of the European party.

The Congress Working Committee which met at Gandhiji's hut passed two resolutions to be placed before the A. I. C. C., the first one ratifying the leaders' decision with regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals, and the second condemning the grave injustice done to Indian Satyagrahis in South Africa.

Sir Abdur Rahim, former President of the Central Assembly in a statement made an earnest appeal to the Congress leaders to join hands at once with the leaders of the Muslim League to form a strong Interim Government.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru welcomed the declaration of Independence of the Philippines and conveyed the good wishes of India to the people there.

6th. The newly elected All-India Congress Committee met at Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay with Pt. Jawharlal Nehru as its President, and discussed the Cabinet Mission's proposals to summon a Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free and Independent India.

Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty declared: The Indian people have been at last persuaded that "we have no desire for them to live in anything but complete freedom and such independence as they choose, within or without the British Commonwealth."

Presiding over the session of the Hyderabad Legislative Council, the Nawab of Chhatari, President of the Nizam's Executive Council announced the introduction of the Reforms Scheme in Hyderabad after three months and also expressed the hope that in the next session of the Council, a new Legislative Assembly would be in existence as a result of elections to be held under the new Reforms scheme.

Col. Niranjan Singh Gill assured the Working Committee of the A. I. C. C. that the Sikhs were wholly behind the Congress and requested it to ensure a proper place for the Sikh Community in Punjab, where it was an important minority.

7th. The All-India Congress Committee after a two-day session concluded to-day after passing two resolutions, one ratifying the Delhi resolution of the Working Committee deciding to enter the Constituent Assembly, and the second, according support to the Indian Satyagraha in South Africa. Mahatma Gandhi also addressed the A. I. C. C.

Addressing a mass meeting of over a lakh of people who had gathered at the flag salutation ceremony of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru declared that the Congress adhered to the policy of "Quit India" adopted in August 1942, and whatever decisions the Congress took would be based on that policy.

In his "*Harijan*" to-day, Mahatma Gandhi explained the pros and cons of Harijan Unions and urged the marriages between the two.

8th. A delegation of industrial experts from all parts of India, headed by Sir M. Visvesvaraya, arrived at Liverpool for a month's study of the current conditions in Britain.

Various problems relating to food, services, labour and administration were discussed at a conference of Congress Ministers from different provinces held at the secretariat to-day at Bombay.

In the House of Commons to-day, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-secretary for India, in reply to a question said: "The Anglo-Indian Community will have due representation in the Advisory Committee referred to in paragraphs 18 and 20 of the Statement published on May 16, and this will enable them, together with other minorities, to put their case effectively before the Constituent Assembly."

Presidents and secretaries of the Provincial Congress Committees from all parts of India gathered at the Congress house at Bombay and concrete steps were taken for the organisation of a Congress Volunteer Corps under the leadership of Major General Shah Nawaz Khan of the I. N. A

Two members of the League Assembly party in the Sind Legislative Assembly resigned from the party and went over to the opposition to-day.

A four-man committee, including Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari was appointed by the Congress Working Committee meeting in Bombay to seek settlement among the Indians in Ceylon.

9th. The Congress President, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru officially announced the names of members of the new Congress Working Committee. The following members were nominated :—Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Gaffar Khan, Pandit Gobinda Ballabh Pant, Mr., C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose. Srimati Kamala Devi (Karnatak), Rao Saheb Patwardhan (Maharastra), Mr. Fakhruddin Ahmed (Assam), Sardar Pratap Singh (Punjab), Srimati Mridula Sarabhai, and Dr. Balakrishna V. Keskar.

The Standing Committee of the All-India States' People's Conference met at Congress House and discussed the question of State's participation in the Constituent Assembly. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru presided.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met Mahatma Gandhi at Harijan Niwas, Worli and had talks with him for an hour.

Mr. G. M. Syed, Leader of the Opposition in the Sind Assembly addressed a communication to the Viceroy, requesting His Excellency to call upon the Premier, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah to tender his resignation as he had forfeited the confidence of the majority.

The National Planning Committee of India, which held an informal meeting under the presidentship of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru at Bombay, recorded its strong protest against the abolition of the Planning Department by the Caretaker Govt.

Mr. C. R. Gibbon, M. L. A. (Punjab) welcomed the Congress decision to give representation to the Anglo-Indian community in the Constituent Assembly.

10th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Congress President, declared at a Press Conference that the Congress will enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise."

Under the presidentship of Col. Niranjan Singh Gill, the Pratinidhi Panthic Board body, fully representative of the four and a half million Sikhs of the Punjab, unanimously decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, in a press interview declared that it would be "suicidal" for the Muslims to enter the Constituent Assembly at present.

The All India States' People's Conference, which concluded its two-day session, adopted a resolution authorising the President, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru to take such further action as may be necessary in connection with the affairs in Kashmir state.

The Un-official U. S. Famine Commission completed its whirwind tour of India.

Addressing a mammoth meeting of over 2 lakhs of people at the Shivaji Park, Bombay Pandit Jawharlal Nehru said that the Congress decision to enter the Constituent Assembly did not mean the dawn of a new era of freedom and sovereignty for the people of India.

In his prayer speech at Poona, Mahatma Gandhi declared: "Western civilisation was digging its grave in S. Africa. If our people remain steadfast and non-violent till the end, their heroic struggle will drive the last nail in the coffin of Western civilisation which is being out in true colours in S. Africa."

11th. The strike called out by the All India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union commenced to-day in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and some other centres. Madras city however was not affected.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in a statement to the Press on the postal strike, urged both the Government of India and the All-India Postal Union to accept a full adjudication or arbitration of the entire dispute.

"India will be debated in both Houses of Parliament on July 18"—this was officially announced by Mr. Herbert Morrison, Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House.

The Nawab of Chhatari, President of the Nizam's Executive Council relinquished his office and left for Bombay.

The admissibility of a "no-confidence" motion against the Ministry when the Assembly had been convened for a specific purpose was hotly debated in the Sind Legislative Assembly when it met to elect representatives to the Constituent Assembly.

12th. His Excellency the Governor of Sind prorogued the Sind Assembly session. In the day's sitting, the speaker announced the result of elections to the Constituent Assembly.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan General Secretary, All-India Muslim League announced that the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League will be held at Bombay on July 27 and 28.

A demand for new elections to the Sind Assembly was made by the Premier, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatulla.

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the Congress Socialist leader, in a statement to the press expressed dissatisfaction at the Congress participating in the Constituent Assembly and urged the need for preparation for a country-wide revolutionary action.

The ban on the All-India Forward Bloc was withdrawn by the Congress Ministry in the U. P.

13th. The New York "*Times*", in a leading article wrote: "Famine is marching on India at a pace that promises disaster by the late summer unless measures are taken promptly. Starvation and death threaten a hundred million people. Many need our surplus food but none more than India."

The Government of India, by a notification issued in the Gazette of India, amended the Paper (prices of imported paper) Control Order 1944 and issued a revised schedule of ceiling prices for different varieties of imported papers.

Mahatma Gandhi and his party arrived at Panchgani from Poona to-day.

14th. A 14-day ultimatum for strike in the event of non-acceptance of their 9-fold demands was given by the All India Postal and R. M. S. Union, Calcutta Branch.

It was officially announced that the Government of India had agreed to grant a long term credit of 5 crores of rupees to the Government of Siam.

All the eight Sikh nominees to the Constituent Assembly—four Congress and four Akalis—withdrew their nominations according to the decision of the Pratindhi Panthic Board.

The Bombay Congress Assembly Party at its meeting unanimously decided to nominate Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. M. R. Jayakar and 17 other candidates for elections to the Constituent Assembly.

15th. Sir Eric Conran-Smith, Member for Posts and Air, said that the Government might take a week's time to examine the points of the adjudicator's report and thus effect a settlement of the postal dispute.

Followers of the Scheduled Castes Federation in the Bombay Province launched a "non-violent satyagraha" in Poona to protest against the "injustice done to them by the British Cabinet proposals."

16th. Sir Joseph Bhore, former Adviser, Bhopal State, was nominated by the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes as the Indian States' Representative in the Indian Delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris.

Dwelling on the future progress of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. M. K. Munshi, member of the Constitution Sub-Committee set up by the Congress, declared, "It would be fatal if the formation of the Interim Government is postponed and the Constituent Assembly in reduced to a debating society."

17th. The newly constituted Bengal Legislative Assembly, at its meeting, elected representatives of Bengal to the Constituent Assembly.

The Railway Standing Finance Committee recommended that the proposal to abolish the Lower Gazetted Service should be referred to the High Power

Committee and also further recruitments of Europeans from U. K. should cease except for appointments to special posts in technical services.

In the Bombay Assembly, Mr. Abdul Kadar Shaikh (League) moved an adjournment motion regarding the mishandling of the riot situation in Ahmedabad."

18th. The debate on India commenced both in the House of Commons and House of Lords. Giving an account of the Cabinet Mission's success in India, Lord Pethic-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords made an appeal to the two major parties in India to put aside their keen communal and party feelings and work together for the good of India. The President of the Board of Trade, Sir Stafford Cripps opened the debate on India in the House of Commons.

Six persons were killed and 27 injured as a result of police firing on a mob in Rutlam State.

The Government of India announced their willingness to accept in their entirely the Adjudicator's Award for relief to the non-gazetted staff of the Posts and Telegraphs department.

Thirty-two of the 33 Muslim seats from Bengal in the Constituent Assembly was won by Muslim League candidates, the other seat went to Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq (Krishak Proja Party).

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, Congress Socialist Leader asked the members of the C. S. P. not to stand for election to the Constituent Assembly.

Ten thousand people, predominantly of the Scheduled Castes Federation, staged a demonstration outside the C. P. Assembly as a protest against the Cabinet Mission's proposals.

19th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in a press statement, referredto the terrible flood havoc that swept over East Bengal & Assam and urged the people for immediate financial help as well as personal service.

Twenty-five out of the 27 general seats on the Constituent Assembly from Bengal was captured by the Congress. The other two seats had gone to Dr. Ambedkar (Scheduled Caste) and Mr. Somnath Lahiry (Communist).

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru issued a circular letter to all Provincial Congress Committees making some general instructions for the observance of August 9.

Mr. V. G. Dalvi, General Secretary of the All-India Postmen, Lower Grade Staff and R. M. S. said that the Adjudicator's award will not affect the strike unless the Government agreed to meet representatives of the strikers with a genuine desire for a settlement.

20th. Fifteen Muslim League candidates and one Unionist Muslim were declared elected to the Constituent Assembly from the Punjab.

Police opened fire in Dariyapur locality near Ahmedabad.

The Experts Committee of the Congress appointed in connection with the Constituent Assembly met in New Delhi with Pandit Nehru as the President.

Mr. Ahmed Jaffer, M. L. A. (Central) urged the Govt. of India to summon immediately a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Posts and Air Department to consider the postal strike.

Condemning the recent events in Goa, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in a Press statement said : "Goa is as much a part of India as any other part and the freedom of India inevitably includes the freedom of the people of Goa."

A delegation of the East African Indian National Congress had an interview with Gandhiji and discussed the status of Indians in East Africa.

21st. At a public reception in New Delhi, Pandit Jawharlal explained the Congress position and said that the Congress was entering the Constituent Assembly with the object of working it out and if they found that they were unable to achieve their purpose they would withdraw from it and wreck it.

The general strike in all postal departments in Calcutta commenced to-day at midnight.

Mahatma Gandhi performed the dedication ceremony of a property worth Rs. 50,000 donated by Seth Shantilal Mangaldas of Ahmedabad to be turned into a sanatoriun for the poor Harijans at Panchgani.

The Shiromani Akali Dal, the premier Sikh organisation, assured full support to the Panthic Board's contemplated "morcha" against the Cabinet Mission's scheme and called upon the Board and its "dictator" Col. Niranjan Singh Gill, to expedite the launching of direct action.

A message of good-will and full support to Indian passive resisters in Durban was sent by Mahatma Gandhi.

Mr. V. V. Giri, Minister for Labour and Industries, indicated that the Madras Government would soon introduce a Trade and Industrial Disputes Act at the ensuing session of the Madras Assembly.

22nd. Mr. M. S. Aney, Indian representative in Ceylon met Pandit Nehru and discussed with him the Indian situation in Ceylon.

In response to a call by the Bombay Provincial T. U. C., 74 labour unions involving 300,000 workers observed a one-day general strike.

Mahatma Gandhi observed "Kasturba Day" to-day.

The Experts Committee of the Congress adjourned after a three-day session.

The U. P. Legislative Assembly discussed the Budget presented by the Congress Ministry.

The Bombay Municipal Corporation unanimously passed a resolution expressing full sympathy with the passive resistance movement in S. Africa.

The need for India getting more foreign supplies in food was emphasised by the Punjab Food Minister, Sardar Baldev Singh, in a press interview.

The resolution urging the Government to take steps for expansion of compulsory primary education in the province was discussed in the Bombay Legislative Assembly.

23rd. A one-day general strike of all workers in Madras city commenced to-day in sympathy with the Post and Telegraphs employees on strike.

The three-day session of the Frontier Congress Parliamentary Party concluded in Peshawar.

A joint appeal for funds for the relief of I. N. A. personnel was issued by the Congress President, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the I. N. A. Relief and Enquiry Committee.

The Executive Committee of the South African Indian Congress completed a three-day Conference at Cape town after passing several resolutions. The Committee further appointed a deputation to proceed to U. S. and place facts relating to the conditions of Indians in S. Africa.

The twenty-fifth annual meeting and Silver Jubilee of the Madras Presidency Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society was celebrated under the presidency of Sir Archibalds Nye, the Governor.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in a press statement made an appeal to postal and telegraph workers on strike not to forget the country's interests while pressing their demands, and assured that the efforts made to arrive at a settlement will be met with success.

24th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Khan Bahadur Mohammad Ali, the Finance Minister presented the Budget estimate for Bengal which revealed a deficit of 10 crores.

A mass rally of Calcutta citizens, students and women took place to demand the release of all categories of political prisoners. A demonstration was also staged in front of the Bengal Assembly House.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and his party arrived in Srinagar to-day

A resolution opposing grouping of Sind with the Punjab was passed at a Conference held under the auspices of the Sind Progressive Muslim League, Sheikh Abdul Majid presiding.

The Central Pay Commission released a questionnaire to be sent to various labour organisations and public men in the country to get their opinions on the present standards of pay of Government employees and also invite suggestion for revision of the existing scales of pay.

In the U. P. Legislative Assembly, Pandit Gobinda Ballabh Pant, the Premier referred to the "deplorable situation" the province had to face and explained the measures adopted by the Government.

Mahatma Gandhi, in a statement on the Goa Satyagraha movement, advised the people to fight for civil liberty and await for Swaraj after the whole of India is free.

25th. The U. S. Famine Mission to India in a report to the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Clinton Anderson, declared at Washington that India was in urgent need of two million tons of foodgrains if widespread famine in the country was to be averted.

The General Council of the Bengal Committee of the A. I. T. U. C. called upon all affiliated unions in the province to observe a one-day general strike on July 29 in support of the postal & telegraphs workers on strike.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru had his first interview with Sheikh Mohd. Abdulla at Srinagar. He was also present in the court during Sheikh Abdulla's trial.

Mr. Morarji Desai, Home Minister, refuted the charges made against the Ahmedabad district police by opposition members in the Bombay Legislative Assembly.

A Conference to settle the details of the Khadi production scheme of the Madras Govt. was held under the presidentship of the Prime Minister of Madras.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose was accorded a public reception in Rangoon with great enthusiasm.

26th. The Bengal Assembly discussed a non-official resolution moved by the Deputy Speaker, Mr. Tafazzal Ali (Muslim League) on the question of eviction of Bengali immigrants in Assam Valley.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League held a four-hour session at the residence of Mr. Jinnah without passing any resolution.

The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference met at Calcutta with Mrs. Hansa Mehta, the President in the chair.

The Breton-Woods Committee of the Central Assembly which met to-day agreed to a proposal to pay to the International Bank two percent of India's subscription which she had been called to pay by the 24th. of August.

27th. The Council of the All-India Muslim League met at Bombay to reconsider the Cabinet Mission's proposals. Mr. Jinnah in his opening speech reiterated on the demand for "Pakistan as the only course left open to the Muslim League". Sir Feroz Khan Noon, who also spoke, urged the League Council to reject the Cabinet Mission's plan.

28th. The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference concluded its three-day session after passing several resolutions.

Dewan Chamanlal, President of the Federation of the All-India Postal and Telegraphs Union left by air for Argentina on a special food mission to that country.

Mahatma Gandhi answered a series of questions put to him and to members of the All-India Congress Committee by the Scheduled Castes' Federation on the rights of Harijans.

Addressing a public meeting, Mr. Mehrchand Khanna, Finance Minister, N. W. F. P., strongly repudiated the charge that the opposition of the Pathans to compulsory grouping with the Punjab was engineered by the Frontier Hindus.

The usefulness of running classes for the study of current political topics was stressed by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari inaugurating a "Political class" organised by the Adyar Congress Committee.

29th. The Council of the All-India Muslim League concluded its three-day session after passing two resolutions, one rejecting the British Cabinet Delegation's proposals and the other deciding to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan. The Council also called upon Muslim title-holders to renounce the titles conferred on them by the British Government.

There was a complete "hartal" throughout Calcutta and its suburbs.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru returned to Delhi from Kashmir.

The food position in India was outlined by Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-secretary of State for India, in reply to a question in the House of Commons.

At the Budget session of the Cochin Legislative Council, the Maharaja of Cochin, in his message, stressed the necessity for a united Kerala as an essential step to enable the people of the West Coast to play an important part in the cultural and political life of the country.

30th. Pandit Nehru, the Congress President, had a 90-minute interview with Viceroy. The situation arising from the Muslim League's decision to reject the Cabinet Mission's proposals was discussed.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League met again at Jinnah's residence. A number of resolutions on the Indians in S. Africa, in Ceylon and in Palestine were passed. The Committee further fixed August 16 as the day for observing the "Direct Action Day" throughout India.

The policy the Provincial Governments should follow in the matter of basic education and the problems connected with the introduction of primary education were discussed at an Educational Conference held at Poona.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad expressed extreme regret at the Muslim League Council's decision with regard to the Cabinet Mission's plan.

Mr. J. J. Singh, President of the India League in America advocated that United Nations should step in and arbitrate "in the present dangerous political situation in India before bloodshed and chaos envelope the people of India."

The *London Times* in an editorial condemned the stand taken by the Muslim League by their threat of "direct action."

At a meeting of the Congress Legislative Party, Mr. T. Prakasam, Leader of the Party, ruled out Mr. A. Vaidyanatha Aiyar's resolution urging postponement of introduction of budget in the Legislature.

31st. The Budget session of the Madras Legislative Assembly commenced; Mr. J. Sivashanmugam Pillai, the speaker, presided. A deficit of Rs. 9 crores was revealed in the budget estimates for 1946-47.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, reviewing the League Council decisions at a Press Conference stated: "We have done our best and any further initiative now must come either from the British Government or from the Congress."

The Railway Board accepted the compromise formula for interim relief to railwaymen suggested by the Advisory Committee of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation.

August 1946

The employees of the various branches of the Imperial Bank of India went on a strike.

The postal strike throughout India came to an end.

Mr. Jinnah declared that the suggestion to refer the League's case to arbitration was unacceptable to him.

Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar assumed charge as Dewan of Mysore.

Death anniversary of Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore was celebrated in Calcutta.

The Viceroy had consultations with the Governors of N. W. F. P., Punjab, Sind, U. P. and Bengal.

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha.

The ban on the All India Forward Bloc was lifted.

Raja Mahendra Pratap of Hathras returned to Madras from Japan.

At the All-India Food Ministers' Conference a resolution demanding that the Government of India should secure additional supplies of food grains from overseas was adopted.

Pandit Nehru was invited by the Viceroy to form an Interim Government at the Centre.

The Congress Party walked out of the Bengal Assembly as a protest against "the Government's declaration of Aug. 16 as a public holiday."

Pandit Nehru informed Mr. Jinnah the Viceroy's invitation to form an Interim Government and invited the latter's co-operation in the task.

The Sikhs decided to enter the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru met Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy announced the Bengal Governments order for the release of all remaining terrorist prisoners.

"Direct Action" day was observed in Calcutta by the Muslims. Mass-murder, looting, arson etc. continued unabated for four consecutive days. Police remained inactive.

Mr. Jinnah informed Pandit Nehru his Party's non-co-operation with the Congress in the formation of the Interim Government.

A joint appeal to the people of Calcutta "to stop this fratricidal war at once" was issued by prominent Bengal leaders.

पुस्तकालय
गुरुकुल काँगड़ी.

Pt. Jawharlal Nehru had interviews with the Viceroy.

Early recall of the Bengal Governor and the dismissal of the League Ministry was urged by Mr. Sarat Ch. Bose.

Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council tendered their resignations on the eve of the formation of the Interim Government.

Communal disturbances broke out in Allahabad.

The Viceroy announced the formation of the Indian Interim Government. In a broadcast, His Excellency appealed to the Muslim League to join the Interim Government and enter the Constituent Assembly.

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan was stabbed at Simla.

The Strike on the S. I. Railway commenced.

H. E. the Viceroy arrived in Calcutta.

The Congress Working Committee met at Bhangi Colony and passed a number of resolutions.

Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Nehru discussed with the Viceroy the riot situation in Calcutta.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, the Bengal Premier announced that there would be a full Commission to enquire into the Calcutta riots.

Mr. J. P. Narain was nominated a member of the Congress Working Committee.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan asked the Muslims throughout India to observe "Black Day" on Sept. 2.

1st. The Federation of Posts and Telegraph Unions accepted the fresh concessions made by the Government of Indin and called off the general strike scheduled to begin on August 3.

The strike by the clerks, cashiers and subordinate staff of the various branches of the Imperial Bank of India commenced.

The Muslim League's decision with regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals was discussed by the Ministers of the British Cabinet at London.

Addressing the members of the Madras Presidency College. Botany Association, Mr. R. M. Sundaram, I. C. S., secretary Development Department, stressed the importance of applying improved methods of agriculture for increasing food production and outlined the steps taken by the Madras Government in this direction.

The Andhra Institute of Public Affairs was inaugurated by Dr. Pattabhai Sitaramayya before a large gathering. The Maharaja of Pithapuram presided. Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer delivered the inaugural address on "citizenship in free India."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at a public meeting answered a number of points raised by Mr. Jinnah during his speeches in the League Council meeting and in his press Conference. Sardar Patel said that the Congress would not yield to the threats put forth by the League leader and asked the Muslims "to give up quarrels and to take to the constructive path of co-operation."

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru made a reference to the controversy on the status of the Constituent Assembly and to the Muslim League's decision while addressing the students and professors of the Allahabad University. He said, 'India was bound to attain her independence. No one could stop it. The recent decision of the Muslim League or such other matters might delay this independence, but they could not stop it."

2nd. As a result of the demands being accepted by the Government, the 23 day old postal strike was called off by Mr. V. G. Dalvi, the General Secretary of the All-India Postmen & Lower Grade staff Union.

Mr. Mohammad Ali, Finance Minister summing up the discussions of the provincial budget in the Bengal Legislative Assembly stated that a searching and sifting enquiry into what is commonly called the scandal of boat construction programme that entailed a loss of 1 crore and 73 lacs of rupees to the Provincial Government would be instituted and punishment would be meted out to the offenders.

A ten-point plan to provide India with a modern aircraft industry at a cost of Rs. 1,30,00,000 in the first five years was outlined in a secret report to the Government of India issued by the U. K. Aircraft Mission.

The General debate of the Revised Budget for 1946-47 opened in the Madras Legislative Assembly. Mr. J. Sirashanmugham Pillai, the Speaker presided.

3rd. In the Bengal Assembly, in reply to a question put by Kumar Bimal Chandra Singha, the Ministry refused to hold a public inquiry into the police excesses during the 1942 August disturbances in Bengal.

A press Note issued in New Delhi announced substantial increase in the supply of petrol for civil consumption in India consequent on the ratification of the American loan to Britain.

An elaborate statement on the demand for total Prohibition in all districts this year was made at a meeting of the Madras Congress Legislative Party.

4th. A reference to the postal strike was made by Mahatma Gandhi in to-day's issue of the "*Harijan*". He added that the situation arising out of the postal strike, and also other disorders in the country was not suitable for the observance of "hartal" on August 9.

The Punjab Government lifted the ban on public meetings and processions in the principal towns in the Province.

Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, speaking on the "place of States in Free India", at a public meeting at Madras, observed that the only remedy for the grievance of the States' subjects was to attain freedom for India.

The Power and Fuel Sub-Committee appointed by the National Planning Committee recommended electrification of railways in India as far as possible with a view to achieve greater efficiency and conserve the country's limited coal resources.

Inaugurating the Kasturba Grama Sevika Training Institute, the first training centre in Tamil Nad, Srimati Sucheta Kripalani observed that they "looked upon these Sevikas as the symbols of Indian regeneration."

5th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in an interview, declared that the suggestion to refer the League's case to arbitration was unacceptable to him. Replying to the suggestion made by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, he said that the proposal was made to impress the ignorant public in India and abroad that the Congress was reasonable and conciliatory in its attitude towards the demand of the Muslim League." The Muslim demand of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah said, was based on the right of self-determination and was not subject to judicial review.

Sir Mirza Ismail took over charge as President of H. E. H. the Nizam's Executive Council from Nawab Sir Mehdi Yar Jung Bahadur.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, declared that the possibility of the formation of a Government at the centre by the Congress should be a signal for the Muslim League to start its programme of "direct action" so that "we can resist it by all means and make the functioning of such a Government impossible." He added," At the same time in view of the situation that exists now, there will have to be a fresh start and a new approach to the whole subject of Indian independence."

Mr. P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, in a statement condemned the action of the Government of India in sending Indian troops to Basra on the ostensible plea of safeguarding the interests of Indians, British and Arab there, "as the real intention was to crush the growing movement of the Indian and Iranian workers against the oppression and exploitation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company."

Addressing the Twelfth General Meeting of the Share-holders of the Reserve Bank of India at Madras, Sir C. D. Deshmukh, Governor of the Bank, reviewed the economic and financial condition of the country and reiterated the Bank's opposition to any proposal to scale down India's sterling balances with Britain. He also emphasised the need for Indian banks sticking to sound banking practice and explained the scope for much improvement in the direction.

6th. Sir J. P. Srivastava, former Food Member of the Government of India, was selected by the Caretake Government to lead the Indian delegation to the social and Economic Council to be held at Copenhagen in the end of August.

Mr. Jyoti Bose, a Communist M.L.A., was arrested by the police at Calcutta within the precincts of the Bengal Assembly House.

Seth Damodar Swarup, President of the U. P. C. C. and a Congress Socialist leader, tendered his resignation of membership of the Constituent Assembly to Pandit Govinda Ballabh Pant, the leader of the Congress Assembly Party.

The Council of the Corporation of Madras unanimously adopted a resolution at a meeting requesting the Congress Ministry to include the city of Madras and its suburbs in the scheme of Prohibition.

Sir Chimanlal Sitalvad, in a statement, criticised Mr. Jinnah's observation that the Muslim demand for Pakistan was based on the principle of self-determination. He said, "the expression 'self-determination' has been very much misused in order to make it applicable to conditions in which it is, on the face of it, wholly inapplicable."

7th. In the Madras Council, the Minister of Education announced that the Government would shortly take up the question of the reorganisation of education in the Provinces and that a questionaire would be issued to elicit public opinion on the various points for consideration. The Government, he observed, were very anxious to receive the advice and co-operation of educationists and others interested.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. C. Rajagolapachari, Mr. Fakruddin, and Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh arrived at Wardah to attend the Congress Working Committee meeting. The Congress leaders had also long discussion with Mahatma Gandhi.

The 16-day old postal, telegraph and telephone services strike in Bengal and Assam came to end and the employees returned to work peacefully.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, addressing a workers' meeting at Jubbulpore on his way to Wardah, said that the Muslim League had no solution for the present problems in the country and consequently they were trying to impede others' progress. "But they cannot be allowed to veto the country's progress," he declared.

Spirited speeches on the Congress Ministry's resolution for the abolition of the Zamindari system in the U. P. and the Muslim League opposition's amendment seeking, along with the liquidation of Zamindars, all other forms of private ownership in industries, banking and insurance and the wiping out of all debts were made in the U. P. Legislative Assembly.

Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar arrived in Mysore to-day and assumed charge as Dewan of Mysore.

The 5th. death anniversary of Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore was celebrated in Calcutta.

Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant, the Premier, announced the appointment of three Ministers, Thakur Hukum Singh (Revenue & Forest), Mr. Nisar Ahmed Sherwani (Agriculture & Animal Husbandry) and Mr. Girdhari Lala (Excise, Stamp and Revenue) to the U. P. Cabinet.

8th. H. E. the Viceroy had consultations with the Governors of the N. W. F. P., Punjab, Sind, U. P. and Bengal. The discussion, believed to be with regard to the Muslim League's 'direct action' threat, lasted three hours.

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha for four hours and discussed the representation of the Sikh delegation and also the political situation in the country. Mahatma Gandhi was present at the meeting for about two hours.

The importance of the Wardha session of the Congress Working Committee was emphasised by the "*London Times*" in an editorial to-day. It said that the Committee was confronted with momentous issues and had to shape the two most important questions—Interim Government and Constituent Assembly.

Addressing the Convocation of the Madras University, Mr. Prakasam, the Premier, deplored the evils of communalism that was spreading in through education. He said, "of all the evils that harm us, the most distressing is the evil of communalism and communalism is showing its head even in the sanctuaries of learning. Higher University or technical education must be regarded as the priviledge of those who are specially fit. Merit, irrespective of community, should decide the priviledge."

Mr. T. R. Venkataram Sastri, President of the Indian National Liberal Federation, in a statement, suggested that international arbitration in the only appropriate course for settling the question of Pakistan.

The Government lifted the ban imposed on the All-India Forward Bloc.

Sir Mirza Ismail, President of the Nizam's Executive Council addressing the people of Hyderabad, predicted a "mighty and glorious future" for the State, and warned that great effort would be required to achieve the same. He said, "There is no hope of achieving anything worthwhile unless we are all determined to purify this place of personal and party strife."

At the Sri Chittra Council, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Dewan of Travancore, re-emphasised the stand taken by the States with regard to the political future of India.

The Bill for the abolition of Zamindary system in U. P. was passed in the U. P. Legislative Assembly.

9th. The Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution appealing to the Sikhs to reconsider their decision regarding the Constituent Assembly and to express their willingness to take part in it. By another resolution the Committee appointed the same Parliamentary Sub-Committee as before, consisting of Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

The "9th August" was celebrated in the principal cities throughout India.

The Provincial Food Ministers and representatives of leading Indian States met in Conference in New Delhi to survey the food situation and the prospect for the next four months. Sir Robert Hutchings, Food Member, Government of India, presided.

India's sterling balances and the grave economic confusion in the country were discussed by Mr. Monu Subedar, M. L. A. (Central), addressing the Commerce Graduate Association at Bombay.

Mr. M. K. Munshi, a member of the Experts Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress, speaking at Poona, expressed the hope that good sense would still prevail with leaders of the Muslim League and that it would join the Constituent Assembly. He added that even if they did not, the Congress was pledged to look after the claims of the minorities.

A deputation consisting of Mr. R. B. Pandaya, representative of the East Africa Overseas Merchants' Chamber, and Mr. V. Rupani, Secretary of the Chamber met Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and explained to him the difficulties that face Indians in East African territories.

Raja Mohendra Pratap of Hathras, United Provinces, arrived in Madras to-day from Japan after 31 years' exile.

Giving his impressions on the Peace Conference issues, Sir Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, the Indian delegate to the Peace Conference at Paris, said: "India as a great country, when she comes into her own, will naturally demand her rightful place in international politics in accord with her war record, her population and her resources.

Sir Patrick Spens, Chief Justice of India, at a meeting of the Madras Advocates' Association, discussed the aspects of the future constitution of India with special reference to the problems that might come up before the Federal Court and suggested the establishment of a legal convention between the Centre and the Provinces for this purpose.

10th. The Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution making it clear that while the Congress did not approve of all the proposals contained in the State Paper they accepted the scheme in its entirety. The resolution further regretted the decision of the Muslim League not to participate in the Constituent Assembly and appealed for the co-operation of all those who seek the freedom and good of the country in the hope that co-operation in common talks may lead to the solution of many of India's problems."

Muslim India's sympathy for the Indian struggle in South Africa was conveyed by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a telegram to the secretary of the Natal Indian Congress.

The All-India Food Ministers' Conference which concluded its session at New Delhi, unanimously adopted a resolution demanding of the Government of India to secure additional supplies of food-grains from over-seas in order to avoid a wide scale breakdown of the health and life of the people.

Delhi students observed "hartal" to protest against the action of the police in making "lathi" charge on a procession taken out in observance of August 9th.

Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh, President of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference in his speech at the Empire Press Conference, deplored the scarcity of Indian news published in the British press and the ignorance which, he said, prevailed among a large section of the British public about the Indian situation.

11th. A resolution extending full support to the Indians in Goa and condemning "the Fascist and authoritarian administration of Portugal" over the people there was passed by the Congress Working Committee.

The part that youths could play in the educational and social uplift of the masses was emphasised by Mr. M. Rathnaswami, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, presiding over a conference of youths at Madras.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, addressing a gathering of students at Nagpur said: "In a subject country like India which is struggling to be free from the foreign yoke the students cannot avoid dabbling in politics. But it is absurd for the students to tell the country what to do and what not to do in certain circumstances. The country does not want their lead. The students study in the Colleges not to lead, but to learn how to help the country's cause by understanding the conditions of the million of the villages in India."

12th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, the Congress President, was invited by the Viceroy to form an Interim Government at the Centre. The following communique was issued from the Viceroy's House:—"His Excellency the Viceroy, with the approval of his Majesty's Government, has invited the President of the Congress to make proposals for the immediate formation of an Interim Government and the President of the Congress has accepted the invitation. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru will shortly visit New Delhi to discuss his proposal with H. E. the Viceroy."

Criticising the Congress Committee's resolution, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a statement, said, "The latest resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed at Wardha on the 10th August does not carry us anywhere because it is only a repetition of the Congress stand taken by them from the very beginning only put in a different language and phraseology."

The Congress Assembly party walked out of the Bengal Legislative Assembly to-day as a protest against "the Government's policy in giving effect to a party decision through Governmental authority," in declaring August 16 as a public holiday.

The death occurred at Poona of Rao Bahadur K. N. Dixit, retired Director-General of Archaeology, Govt. of India.

The appeal of the Congress Working Committee to the Muslim League for co-operation in the task of shaping the future of independent India was welcomed by Mr. L. S, Amery, former Secretary of State for India in a press statement. "This is certainly an improvement in the situation", Mr. Amery said. "Nevertheless, so much depends on the Muslim League that it is a very delicate situation and I think that perhaps further comments at this stage would be unwise."

13th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru wrote to Mr. M. A. Jinnah informing him of the Viceroy's invitation to him to form an Interim Government and inviting Mr. Jinnah's co-operation in the fulfilment of the task.

Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad and Sardar Patel held a Conference and discussed the proposals to be submitted to the Viceroy by the Congress President for the formation of the Interim Government.

The U. P. Legislative Assembly discussed a resolution by Babu Sampurnanand, Finance Minister, seeking the abolition of capitalism in all forms and hence "socialisation of the principal means of production, exchange and distribution."

The Industries Committee of the Textile Control Board discussed questions relating to the adjustment of prices of cotton cloth. Sir Akbar Hydari, Information Member and Sir Arthur Waugh, Supply Member, Government of India, were present at the discussions.

The Government decided to give immediate interim relief amounting to three and a half crores of rupees to lower grade staff, in the Civil Department other than the railways, posts and telegraphs.

The Congress Working Committee concluded its six-day session after passing three resolutions, two pertaining to labour and the third on the constitutional reforms in the Hyderabad State.

14th. The Sikhs decided to enter the Constituent Assembly "when the opportunity comes" and to enter the Interim Government also. This decision was taken by the Panthic Board, the supreme body of the Sikh community, in response to the Congress request.

The action of the Bengal Government in declaring 16th. August a public holiday was severely condemned at a public meeting at Calcutta, Sj. S. M. Ghosh, President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee presided.

Mr. Sudhir Ghose, Mahatma Gandhi's personal envoy in London, had an interview with the British Premier, Mr. Clement Attlee and discussed with him the Indian situation.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru left for Bombay to-day. Prior to his departure, he had a long talk with Mahatma Gandhi at Sevagram.

Mr. George De Silva, Minister for Health and President of the Ceylon National Congress, in a cable to Pandit Nehru, congratulated him on "his acceptance of the office as Prime Minister" and expressed the hope that the Muslim League would join hands with the Congress for the happiness of India and to expedite her complete independence.

The U. P. Legislative Assembly passed without a division a resolution seeking "socialisation of the principal means of production, exchange and distribution" in the province.

Speaking on the Land Revenue Demand in the Madras Legislative Assembly, Mr. T. Prakasam, the Premier, explained the Government plans to give immediate relief to tenants in Zamindary areas and to protect their rights in the matter of use of forests, grazing, etc.

15th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah's reply to Pandit Nehru's letter seeking the co-operation of the League in the formation of an Interim National Government was delivered to Pandit Nehru to-day.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met Mr. M. A. Jinnah at the latter's residence. The meeting lasted eighty minutes.

The Bengal Legislative Council by 31 to 13 votes, rejected an adjournment motion which sought to discuss the Bengal Government's declaration of August 16 as a public holiday.

Addressing the members of the India Council of World Affairs, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru said, "In the future, India is found to be the centre of a very big federation of the of Asia." Pandit Nehru further explained the scope of an "Inter-Asian Relations Conference" to be convened by the India Council of World Affairs sometime in January or February next year.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Chief Minister of Bengal, in the Legislative Assembly, announced that orders have been passed by the Bengal Government for the release of all the remaining terrorist prisoners.

16th. "Direct Action" day was observed by the Muslims in Calcutta. A mass rally was held in the afternoon at the Calcutta "maidan" in observance of the day. A mob violence, unprecedented in the history of India, plunged the great city of Calcutta into an orgy of bloodshed, murder and terror. Mass murder, looting, arson etc. occurred in different parts of the city. Hundreds of lives were lost, thousands were injured, property worth crores of rupees were destroyed.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, the Congress President, announced in his Press Conference that the Muslim League President, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, had declined to offer his party's co-operation to the Congress in the formation of an immediate Provisional National Government. Pandit Nehru said: 'Co-operation in the formation of the Interim Government is being offered to the Congress by all elements excepting the Muslim League. However, in the circumstances, it is obvious that we cannot stand still because of this unfortunate lack of co-operation from the Muslim League. So far as we are concerned, the door of co-operation will always be open and we shall, in whatever we may do, be keeping this larger view-point."

The Madras Legislative Assembly voted the demands for Forests and Registration moved by the Minister for Fisheries and the Law Minister respectively.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Laljee, President of the All-Party Shia Conference, in an interview with Pandit Nehru, placed before him the Shia Muslim point of view in regard to the formation of the Interim Government.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru told the India Council of World Affairs that the Inter-Asian Relations Conference, of which he was one of the orginators, would endeavour to develop healthier political, economic and cultural contacts among the nations of the East.

17th. Rioting continued unabated in Calcutta and unofficial estimates of casuablies totalled 200 killed and over 1300 injured. The entire business life in Calcutta was at a stand-still. Transport services did not function. The police opened fire several times for dispersal of crowds. Curfew was imposed in Calcutta from 9 P. M. to 4 A. M. Section 144 Cr. P. C., prohibiting the assemblage of more than five persons in the streets and the carrying of weapons was also promulgated on the city.

Messrs. Sarat Chandra Bose, H. S. Suhrawardy, Khwaja Nazimuddin, Surendra Mohan Ghosh, Maulana Akram Khan and other party leaders issued a joint appeal to the public of Calcutta "to stop this fratricidal war at once." The leaders, along with Sir Frederic Burrows, Governor of Bengal, also visited some of the disturbed areas of the city.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met the Viceroy to-day. The talks which lasted an hour and a half, dwelt with the formation of the Interim Government.

Sardar Baldev Singh, the Sikh leader, expressing satisfaction over the revocation of the Panthic Board's decision to boycott the Constituent Assembly, made a pointed reference to the Muslim League's policy of boycott and 'direct action' and characterised it as a "declaration of war against the Sikhs" and inconsistent with Mr. Jinnah's former attitude towards direct action resorted to by the Congress in recent years.

The Standing Committee of the Hyderabad State Congres adopted a resolution rejecting the Reforms announced by the Hyderabad Government and demanding its withdrawal.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in an interview on the Calcutta disturbances, criticised the Bengal Government as "having no high reputation for competence or anything."

Addressing a conference of Rulers and Ministers of the Central India States, the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes reiterated the importance of speedy introduction of internal reforms in the States.

Members of the Indian Industrial Delegation of the All-India Manufacturers' Organisation, headed by Sir M. Visvesvarayya, met the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence.

18th. The situation in Calcutta remained unchanged. Murder, looting, and arson continued throughout the day. The police opened fire several times in different parts of the city. Unofficial estimates of casualties throughout the day revealed 600 killed and 250 injured. There was a heavy exodus of people, including men, women and children from the city. The military was called out towards the afternoon to assist the police in restoring law and order.

Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel and Babu Rajendra Prasad met together at New Delhi. Later, Pandit Nehru had further talks with the Viceroy in course of which he submitted a list of names of persons for inclusion in the Interim Government.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah in a statement said: "Pandit Jawharlal Nehru would have been nearer the truth if, instead of saying that there was lack of co-operation from the League, he had said that the Muslim League was not prepared to surrender; and it would have been still more true if, instead of saying that the Congress door of co-operation was set open, he had said that Congress door was open to the Muslim League for abject surrender."

The India Office announced a decision not to proceed with the appointment of "war service" candidates to the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Political Service and the Indian Police under the recruiting plan announced on June 1, 1945.

The Tamil Nad Congress Committee, under the presidency of Mr. K. Kamraj Nadar, rejected the resolution moved by Mr. D. H. Arunachalam suggesting that Congress should not contest officially the elections to local bodies and also expressed disapproval to the proposed strike of the S. I. R. Union in view of the critical food and cloth position in the country.

19th. After three days of extreme killing, loot and arson the situation in Calcutta showed signs of improvement. Heavy exodus of people continued throughout the day. A great deal of relief work was carried out by the military and other organisations. Rescue Parties and Peace Committees were formed by both communities in different localities of the city. Tension, however, prevailed everywhere.

Col. Nirajan Singh Gill met Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and the Congress Parliamentary Sub-Committee at New Delhi. During the discussion complete agreement on the formation of the Interim Government and other constitutional matters allied to it was reached between the Congress and the Sikh Panthic Board.

The formation of a non-political organisation in London "for the cultural assertion of India in Great Britain" was announced by Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, Secretary of the India League, at Bombay.

Mr. R. K. Sidhwa, Secretary of the Sind Coalition Assembly Party and a

Parsi Congress leader, in a statement refuted the suggestion which Mr. Jinnah made in his recent statement replying to Pandit Nehru, "that the Parsi organisation is certainly not with the Congress."

Pandit Dwarka Prasad Mishra, Information Minister of the Central Provinces uttered a stern warning that the Government would have to take stern action against the members of the Scheduled Castes in Nagpur if there was no improvement in the attitude of their leaders in general.

20th. There was a very marked improvement in the situation in Calcutta. Transport services resumed partially, but only under military escort. Inter-communal co-operation helped to maintain peace in some localities of the city. Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, in a telephone call to His Excellency the Viceroy's Secretary, urged the need for the Viceroy's immediate presence in Calcutta.

A peace mission including Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, Mr. Surendra Mohan Ghosh and other leaders toured round the affected areas of Calcutta appealing to the people to maintain peace and goodwill and to forget the happenings of the last few days.

An appeal to the students to prepare themselves for shouldering great responsibilities in the near future was made by Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali speaking at a public meeting under the auspices of the Madras branch of the Indian Students' Congress.

The "*London Times*" to-day attributed the blame for the Calcutta tragedy to delay on the part of the Muslim League Govt. of Bengal in taking adequate precautions and said that Pandit Nehru cannot acquit himself of some share at least in precipitating Mr. Jinnah's disastrous decision to remain aloof. Statesmen of both Muslim and Hindu communities should learn a lesson from the outbreak, the *Times* further said.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, in a press interview, said that the Bengal Governor, Sir Frederick Burrows should be recalled, the present Muslim League Ministry in Bengal dismissed and Calcutta placed under military control for at least a fortnight.

Emphasising the importance of the profession of journalism in modern public life and the power and responsibility attached to it, the Dewan of Mysore, Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar urged that the closest possible relationship should be maintained between the Press and the Administration.

21st. Mr. Maula Bux, member of the Coalition Party in the Sind Assembly, met Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and informed him of the situation in Sind and the attitude of the Coalition Party to the formation of the Interim Government.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in a press statement, denied the report that he declined to discuss the long-term settlement with Mr. Jinnah, during his recent meeting with the League President. Pandit Nehru added: "I said nothing about crushing the Muslim League or anyone. Our policy has not been and will not be to threaten anyone but rather to win him over if we can."

Except for some stray assaults, the situation in Calcutta continued to remain quiet.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, the Bengal Premier, in a broadcast to-day appealed to the citizens of Calcutta to give their fullest co-operation to restore peace and goodwill in the shortest possible time in the city. Explaining the Government's efforts in maintaining law and order, the Premier said that there was no intention of withdrawing the Army until law and order were fully restored. The severity of Government measures, he added, would increase with the outbreak of any fresh incidents in any area.

Addressing the students of the Hindusthani Prachar Sabha's training College, Mahatma Gandhi said, "We are slaves of the English language. If you want to be good Hindusthani propagandists, you must also learn to be good "bhangis" (scavengers) like me."

Mr. V. V. Giri, Minister for Labour, presiding over a public meeting at Madras, expressed the view that strikes should be the last resort for the workers as a means for gaining redress of their grievances.

22nd. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, the Congress President met the Viceroy to-day. The interview lasted 75 minutes.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan of Travancore, inaugurating the Indian Institute for Educational and Cultural Conference at Bombay, declared that the Congress had not acted wisely in having contented itself with a limited Centre in the proposed constitution for India and urged that a strong and powerful Centre should be set up so that the Indian States and the Provinces could be guided together in the common problems facing the country.

Calcutta remained quiet.

Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim tendered his resignation as a member of the Muslim League in a letter to the Bombay Provincial Muslim League.

23rd. The members of the Viceroy's Executive Council tendered their resignation to the Viceroy on the eve of the formation of the Interim Government.

An invitation to Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, to come and have a heart-to-heart talk with him, was made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the Muslim League President.

Mr. T. Prakasam, the Madras Premier, celebrated his 75th birthdry at Madras. Glowing tributes were paid to him by representatives of various political parties and communities.

Four persons were killed and 43 injured in communal disturbances which broke out to-day in Allahabad. Police opened fire several times.

The relation between the Congress Ministries and the respective Provincial Congress Committees was defined by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in a letter to the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee, who had sought his clarification on the point.

A comprehensive statement outlining the Government's policy for the protection of people in the province in the event of anti-social elements in society creating disorders, such as were witnessed in Ahmedabad and Calcutta, was issued by the Bombay Government in a Press Note.

24th. The Viceroy announced the formation of the Indian Interim Government at the Centre. The following communique was issued :—"His Majesty the King has accepted the resignation of the present members of the Viceroy's Executive Council. His Majesty has been pleased to appoint the following:—Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. M. Asafali, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr. John Mathai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Syed Ali Zaheer, and Mr. Coverji Hormusji Bhabha. Two more Muslim members will be appointed later. The Interim Government will take office on Sept. 2."

In a broadcast from New Delhi, H. E. the Viceroy spoke of the formation of the Interim Government and made a special appeal to the Muslim League to reconsider their policy and join the Interim Government and enter the constituent Assembly.

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Member-Designate of the Interim Government, was stabbed by some unknown persons at Simla.

The view that the share of the Musalmans in the new Government should have been kept vacant was expressed by Malik Feroz Khan Noon, former Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in an interview on the formation of the Interim Government. He added, "Congress nominees are hardly the persons who can assuage Muslim's discontent. These appointments are definitely made in a spirit of defiant provocation."

The strike on the South Indian Railway commenced to-day.

The inclusion of Syed Ali Zaheer in the Government was welcomed by Mr. Hosseinbhoy A. Laljee, President of the All-Parties Shia Conference who said that the claim of the Shias had been fully recognised in this appointment.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, President of the All-India States' People's Conference, advised the Cochin State Praja Mandal to offer their co-operation in implementing the new constitutional reform in the State.

A resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, declared that "the setting up of the Interim Government by the Viceroy with the Congress and without the Muslim League is bound to create the strongest possible resentment throughout the Muslim India."

The trial of Sheikh Abdulla, the National Conference Leader, was concluded before the Sessions Judge of Kashmir to-day.

Mr. Reginald Sorensen, a Member of the Parliamentary Delegation to India, in a message to the formation of the Interim Government, congratulated Pandit Jawharlal Nehru on his success in the formation of his Cabinet and expressed regret at Mr. Jinnah's attitude of non-co-operation.

25th. His Excellency the Viceroy arrived in Calcutta and visited some of the disturbed areas of the city. His Excellency had long discussions with the Party leaders on the riot situation in Calcutta.

Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, welcoming the new Interim Government, said he trusted that this Government, consisting of representatives of some of the largest political parties in the country, marked the definite ending of a bureaucratic regime. He further expressed the hope "that the new Government will show statesmanship and firm holding over the many intricate and difficult problems confronting the country."

Following the announcement of the formation of the Interim Government and the Viceroy's broadcast, Mr. M. A. Jinnah released the correspondence that passed between him and the Viceroy between July 22 and Aug. 8.

A meeting of Indian and British sympathisers at Swaraj House, London, demanded the resignation of the Bengal Governor, Sir Frederick Burrows, and the Muslim League Ministry of Bengal for their responsibility in the Calcutta riots. The meeting further passed a resolution demanding an open public enquiry into the causes of the riots.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, in an interview, said, "The Interim Government formed by the Viceroy is not entitled to claim either obedience or respect from the scheduled Castes, in view of the attitude taken up by the Congress with regard to the representation of the Scheduled Classes in the Executive Council."

In his "*Harijan*" under the caption "what can violence do", Mahatma Gandhi condemned the recent riots in Calcutta and criticised the League leaders for preaching violence as a means of attaining their cherished goal.

Mian Abdul Aziz, a prominent member of the Muslim League and a retired Financial Commissioner in the Punjab, urged that the Muslim League should enter the Interim Government, at any rate, to give it a trial.

26th. The Government of Bengal issued a proclamation, to remain in force for two months, under section 15 of the Public Act declaring the town and suburbs of Calcutta and the municipality of Howrah to be in a disturbed and dangerous state.

The police made extensive searches in different parts in Calcutta. Bad characters were rounded up and looted articles worth lakhs of rupees recovered in course of the search.

Commenting on the Viceroy's broadcast on the formation of the Interim Government Mr, Jinnah said, "The Viceroy's broadcast has struck a severe blow to the Muslim League and Muslim India, but I am sure that Mussalmans of India will bear this up with fortitude and courage and learn lessons from our failure to secure our just and honourable position in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly."

A tribute to the greatness of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari as leader and man was paid by Mr. K. R. Karanth, Minister for Revenue, at a meeting of the Lakshmipuram young Men's Association at Madras.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, condemning the recent happenings in Calcutta, said: "This new development of violence has ceased to be communal or political. It has become a challenge to every decent instinct of humanity and it should be treated as such."

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a telegram to Begun Rehman, sister of Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, condemned the brutal and outrageous attack on Sir Shafaat.

27th. Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met the Viceroy. The talks, which lasted an hour, was devoted largely to a review of the riot situation in Calcutta.

An All Party Ministry in Bengal as a first step for permanent solution of the Province's political-communal problem was suggested by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Member-designate of the Interim Government.

The Acting U. S. Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, welcoming the formation of the new Indian Government described the failure of the Muslim League to take part in the Interim Government as "regrettable", but expressed the hope that it would eventually do so.

Prof. Harold Laski, Member of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party in London, sent a message of good will to the people of India on the formation of the new Indian Government.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan of the Muslim League sent a circular letter to all the members of the Party in the Central Legislature to the effect that in view of the proposed objectionable composition of the Viceroy's Executive Council, no member of the Party should attend meetings of any Committees, including the standing committees of various Government departments and select committees on bills or any conference etc, convened by the Government of India.

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A new Committee of Action for the ensuing year was nominated by Mr. M. A. Jinnah. The following were the members of the Committee :—Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr. Mohd. Ismail Khan, Khwaja Nazimuddin, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Haji Abdul Sattar Haji Ishaq Sett, and Mian Mumtaz Daulatana.

28th. The Congress Working Committee, in its session to-day, discussed the questions of policy to be followed by the Interim Government and the problems facing the the country.

Sir Stafford Cripps sent a message to Pandit Nehru congratulating him on forming the Interim Government and wishing him good luck in his difficult task.

Discussing the States' representation on the Constituent Assembly, Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter, Dewan of Baroda, expressed the apprehension that many Indian States might not participate in the Constitution-making body of the British Indian Negotiating Committee demanded that all the States' representatives should be elected and suggested that there should be 50 p. c elected and 50 p. c nominated representation of States.

Mr. Frank Anthony, President of the All-Indian Association, criticised the British Government for the grave injustice done to the Anglo-Indian community with regard to the formation of the Interim Government.

The "*London Times*" to-day made an appeal to Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League to reconsider their policy and join the Interim Government in collaboration with the Congress.

29th. Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and other leaders met Mahatma Gandhi at the Balmiki Colony and prepared the final draft of the Congress statement on the Calcutta happenings and on the communal situation in the country in general.

The acute food shortage in India and how the authorities were confronted with the two problems—cut in ration and obtaining more supplies for deficit areas and how the problems had gone from bad to worse were referred to by Mr. S. S. Holloway, presiding over the annual general meeting of the Cochin Chamber of Commerce.

Addressing a meeting of students at Madras, Mr. Aruna Asaf Ali paid a tribute to the students' heroic part in the 1942 August struggle and warned them from being influenced and misled by foreign ideologists.

30th. The Congress Working Committee concluded its session to-day. The Committee which discussed the distribution of portfolios in the Interim Government, gave full authority to Pandit Nehru to allocate the portfolios in consultation with his colleagues in the new Government and the Viceroy.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Chief Minister of Bengal declared that there would be a full Commission to enquire into the recent Calcutta riots and it would be composed of persons of undoubted independence and judgment.

An appeal to all Muslims in this country and particularly to those who were not with the Muslim League, viz., "Jamiat-Ulemas, Khaksars, Ahrars, and Nationalist Muslims"—to unite and come under the banner of the Muslim League in the sacred interest of Islam was made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, addressing the "Id" gathering at Bombay.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a former member of the Congress Working Committee, urged that the question of linguistic provinces should be taken up as "the first and foremost problem to be solved by the Constituent Assembly" and suggested that in the preliminary sitting the Assembly should constitute a sub-committee for considering this question and appoint a Boundary Commission to report within two months upon the readjustment of boundaries to be effected before provincial constitutions were drafted.

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the Congress Socialist Leader, was nominated as a member of the Congress Working Committee in place of Mr. P. H. Patwardhan (Maharastra)

31st. The Congress Working Committee, in a resolution on the recent Calcutta riots, demanded a "thorough enquiry" by an "impartial tribunal which can command the confidence of the public" and expressed the opinion that "the Government of Bengal utterly failed in its duty to maintain peace and give protection of life and property to peaceful citizens."

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, in a statement, asked the Muslims throughout the country to observe "Black Day" by hoisting black flags on houses and places of business on September 2 "to register the Muslim nation's silent contempt at the installation in office of the Hindu Congress and its satellites."

Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and Dr. K. S. Shelvankar both stressed the necessity of a sound and independent foreign policy for India while speaking at the inauguaral meeting of the Madras branch of the India Council of World Affairs at Royapettah, Madras.

A provisional allocation of portfolios in the new Government was agreed to at a meeting of nine Members designate of the Interim Government.

Seven pre-reform political prisoners of Bengal were released from the Alipore Central jail to-day.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in a statement, dwelt on the great task lying ahead of the Congress and called all Congressmen to rise to the occasion with a spirit of co-operation and discipline and thus lead India rapidly to the goal of freedom.

In his prayer speech, Mahatma Gandhi explained the Congress aim in entering the Interim Government and called upon the people to support the leaders in this great task.

September 1946

The portfolios of the new Interim Government were announced by the Viceroy.

Communal disturbances broke out in Bombay.

The Interim Government assumed office.

At a meeting of the British Cabinet, Lord Pethic Lawrence reported to the Premier, Mr. Attlee on the disturbances in Calcutta and Bombay,

Sir Patrick Spens, Chief Justice of India accepted an invitation to preside over the Calcutta Riots Enquiry Commission.

The ban on Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was lifted.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad tendered his resignation from the Presidentship of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee.

Mr. S. Suhrawardy conveyed to the Viceroy the Muslim League's viewpoint.

Dr. John Mathai, Finance Member and Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Commerce Member assumed charge.

The Central Pay Commission began its sitting in New Delhi.

Mr. Jinnah expressed his desire to have fresh talks with the British Premier at London

The Governor of Sind prorogued the Sind Legislative Assembly,

Sheikh Md. Abdulla, President of Kashmir National Conference was sentenced to 3 years' S. I.

Mr. Jinnah declared at Bombay : "India stands at the brink of ruinous civil war".

The Viceroy invited Mr. Jinnah to Delhi for talks. Mr. Jinnah accepted the Viceroy's invitation.

Pt. Nehru issued orders for the stoppage of air bombardment of tribesmen in Waziristan.

The British Cabinet rejected Mr. Jinnah's proposal to have fresh talks in London.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah had several interviews with H. E. the Viceroy.

The Congress Party's adjournment motion to censure Government was defeated in the Bengal Council.

The Standing Committee of the A. I. States' People's Conference met under the presidentship of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru.

The appointment of Sir Terence Shone as the first British High Commissioner to India was officially announced.

Sardar Baldev Singh assumed office as Defence Member.

The Calcutta "Disturbances" Commission of Enquiry Bill was passed.

Communal disturbances broke out in Dacca.

Two "no-confidence" motions against the League Ministry and the Chief Minister were lost in the Bengal Assembly.

Mahatma Gandhi celebrated his 78th birth day.

The Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha met at Calcutta. Dr. Shyma Prasad Mukherjee presided.

The All India Congress Committee met at Ramjas College, Delhi under the chairmanship of Pt. Jawharlal Nehru.

Pandit Nehru announced his resignation of the Congress Presidentship.

Recrudescence of disturbances occurred in Calcutta.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Minister for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, outlined the foreign policy of India.

Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy urged drastic action by the Bengal Government to stop further riots in the Province.

Pandit Nehru and Mahtma Gandhi interviewed the Viceroy.

Dr. Ram Monohar Lohia was arrested at Colem (Goa).

1st. The portfolios of the new Interim Govt. was announced by H. E. the Viceroy as follows:--External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations—Pandit Jawharlal Nehru; Defence—Sardar Baldev Singh; Home including Information and Broadcasting—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel; Finance—Dr. John Mathai; Communications (War Transport & Railways)—Mr. Asaf Ali; Agriculture and Food—Dr. Rajendra Prasad; Labour—Mr. Jagjivan Ram; Health, Education and Arts—Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan; Legislature, Posts and Air—Syed Ali Zaheer; Industries and Supplies—Mr. C. Rajagopalachari; Works, Mines & Power—Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and Commerce—Mr. C. H. Bhabba.

Thirty seven persons were killed and 170 injured in communal disturbances which broke out in Bombay to-day. The Government of Bombay declared "a state of emergency" in the Bombay city. Curfew and Sec. 144 were also promulgated.

Congratulatory messages from all over the world were received by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, on the eve of assumption of office of the Interim Government.

The remaining twenty-two pre-reform political prisoners of Bengal were released from the Dacca Central Jail to-day.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, on the eve of taking office, said, "I am deeply grateful for all the greetings and good wishes I have received on the formation of the Interim Government. I feel in no mood to congratulate myself or others for we have yet to reach our goal and the path is difficult. So I fervently appeal for co-operation among my countrymen in facing the difficulties ahead. I regret deeply that the Muslim League has chosen a different path, but I shall continue to hope for its co-operation as the door for it will always be open."

2nd. The new Interim Government assumed office to-day. Seven out of the 12 members were sworn in at a ceremony which took place in the Viceroy's House. Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. John Mathai and Mr. C. H. Bhabba were not present at the ceremony. Pandit Nehru took charge of their portfolios until their arrival at Delhi to take office.

Rioting continued in Bombay. Police opened fire at several places. Casualties for the two days were sixty killed and 240 injured. A 24-hours curfew was imposed on the affected areas.

Sardar Swaran Singh, M. L. A. (Punjab) was unanimously elected leader of the Panthic Party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly in place of Sardar Baldev Singh.

An appeal to Indians to extend their helping hand to the Interim Government to tackle the problems relating to the well-being and prosperity of the country's teeming millions was made by Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member in the Interim Government addressing a meeting at Simla.

A resolution expressing full confidence in the Interim Govt. and assuring full co-operation to it was passed by the Punjab Provincial Harijan Conference held under the auspices of the All-India Harijan League.

3rd. The situation in Bombay showed no signs of improvement. Stray assaults, organised clash between rival groups, arson, etc. continued throughout the day. The military were in action. Casualties for the day were 38 killed and 135 injured.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a press interview, stated that he could place no confidence in Congress assurances of equal treatment for Muslims, challenged Mahatma Gandhi's assertion that "Congress could never ally with Britain against the Muslims" and reiterated his contention that Pakistan was the only solution to India's problem. Mr. Jinnah also made the charge that the Viceroy, Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress "cannot be absolved of their main responsibility in creating the Calcutta situation."

The Madras Legislative Assembly discussed to-day the Education Minister's demand for a budget grant for Education in the current year.

4th. There were further recrudescence of trouble in Bombay to-day, especially in the northern part of the city. Police opened fire at several places. Twenty-three persons dead and 83 injured were the casualties for the day. The Governor of Bombay and the Home Ministers toured the affected areas of the city.

Lord Pethic Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, at a meeting of the British Cabinet, reported to the Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee on the disturbances in Calcutta and Bombay.

There was a formal meeting of the new Interim Govt. at the Viceroy's House.

The agreement between the Governments of India and Siam for a credit of Rs. 5 crores was signed in New Delhi to-day.

The United Nations Food & Agricultural Organisation, at its plenary session at Copenhagen, unanimously decided to send a cable of greetings to the new Indian Government expressing recognition of the formidable task with which it was faced. Sir J. P. Srivastava thanked the Conference on behalf of the Indian delegation.

5th. The situation in Calcutta was disturbed as a result of communal trouble which broke out in the different parts of the city. Three persons were killed and 12 injured in the course of the day.

The Chief Justice of India, Sir Patrick Spens, accepted the invitation to preside over the Commission which the Government of Bengal proposed to set to enquire into the recent disturbances in Calcutta.

The situation in Bombay was comparatively quiet after four days of continued disturbance. The total casualties since the trouble started were 177 killed and 546 injured.

An adjournment motion moved by Mr. S. A. Dange (Communist) to discuss the "unjustifiable, indiscriminate and revengeful firing by the Police" was lost in the Bombay Legislative Assembly.

The police opened fire on a riotous mob of railway workers at Trichinopoly, resulting in 3 persons being killed and 9 injured.

6th. Mr. G. M. Syed, leader of the opposition in the Sind Legislative Assembly in a letter to the Governor of Sind, requested His Excellency to call on the League Ministry to resign and "give an opportunity to the opposition to form a Ministry and ensure full working of the Constitutional machinery."

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy met Mr. M. A. Jinnah and discussed with him problems relating to Bengal.

The situation in Bombay was easier except for cases of stabbing and stray assaults which continued throughout the day.

Calcutta was quiet.

The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League criticised the resolution of the Congress Working Committee on the Calcutta disturbances as being "baseless and unwarranted by facts" aud appealed to all Muslims in particular to be calm and peaceful.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Member in charge of Works, Mines and Power in the interim Govt. presiding over the Mica Conference at Delhi, envisaged a co-ordinated policy to ensure conservation and utilisation to the fullest advantage the mineral wealth of the country.

The ban on Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was withdrawn by the Interim Government.

Mr. T. Prakasam, the Madras Premier appealed to Babu Rajendra Prasad, Food Member, Interim Govt., for urgent need of rice supplies in view of the grave food situation in the province.

7th. In his first broadcast as Vice-President of the Interim Government Pandit Jawharlal Nehru explained the free India's role in world affairs and made an earnest appeal to all people to put an end to this fratricidal strike and co-operate with each other in the difficult times ahead.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad tendered his resignation from the Presidentship of Bihar Provincial Congress Committee.

There was a general improvement in the riot situation in Bombay, with only a few cases of assaults. The death roll for the last seven days mounted to 232.

The Madras Legislative Assembly passed the Ryots and Tenents Bill, which was introduced by the Revenue Minister.

Mahatma Gandhi, in his prayer speech, recalled the early days of national struggle in which Hindu-Muslim unity played a predominant part and made an appeal to Mr. Jinnah to give up his idea of violence and thus bring the Hindus and Muslims in friendly relations with each other.

8th. The Committee of the Action of the All-India Muslim League met at New Delhi and discussed matters relating to Bengal.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah lifted the ban imposed upon Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq nearly five years ago.

A plea for Indian unity was made by the Labour member of Parliament, Mr. W. G. Cove, while addressing a large Indian political gathering at Birmingham.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy met H. E. the Viceroy and conveyed to him the Muslim League's view point.

A deputation of Bengal leaders consisting of Mr. S. M. Ghosh, Dr. S. P. Mookherjee and Mr. N. R. Sarkar waited on Pandit Nehru to-day and apprised him of the Calcutta riot situation.

Mr. M. W. H. De Silva, Ceylon Government's Representative in India, expressed the hope at New Delhi that friendly relations would develop between India and Ceylon in the near future.

Reviewing the food position in India, Pearl Buck, chairwoman of the India Famine Emergency Committee at New York, stressed the urgent need for greatly increased supplies of foodgrains for India during the next few weeks.

The annual conference of the Sind Provincial Muslim League adopted a resolution suggesting a deputation of influential Leaguers to Russia to enlist the Soviet Government's support to the League demands of Pakistan and to raise the issue before the United Nations.

Bombay remained quiet, although a few clashes occurred in the northern part of the city. Police opened fire and also made "lathi" charges. Four persons died and 33 were injured.

9th. A fervent appeal to Pandit Nehru and his colleagues to take a bold leap forward and to co-operate with the Muslim League and with the Muslim nation in terms of equality and brotherliness before the chasm yawns too wide to be bridged, was made by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, in a statement.

Dr. John Matthai, Finance Member and Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Commerce Member, in the new Central Government assumed charge to-day.

Mr. S. K. Chatterjee, Director-General of Food, declared that a total of 37,000 tons of foodgrains has been allotted by the Government of India to Bengal for the month of September.

The Central Pay Commission began its open sitting in the secretariat, New Delhi and heard several representatives of service associations.

Participation by India in the proposed International Trade Conference so that she can take her full share in working out plans for the expansion of world trade and employment was recommended to the Government of India by the Trade and Tariffs Sub-Committee of the Consultative Committee of Economists.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, head of the Indian delegation to the Food and Agricultural Conference at Copenhagen, dwelt on the food position in India and appealed to the members of the Organisation to help India as far as possible in the matter of her food resources.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah in a press interview stated : "Were the British Government to invite me to London to start a new series of Conferences on an equal footing with other Indian negotiators, I would accept. If the British insist on doing nothing more than supporting the Interim Government with their bayonets, all I can say is that Muslims can endure it."

Mass scale Muslim hooliganism rendering thousands of people homeless and destitute were reported from Tipperrah and the neighbouring districts of Bengal.

Bombay was quiet.

The appointment by Government of an impartial and independent commission to enquire into the allegations made against the Bombay police during the present disturbances in Bombay was urged by Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan at New Delhi.

10th. With the resignation of the Deputy Speaker, the Sind Legislative Assembly was prorogued by His Excellency the Governor of Sind.

The immediate intervention of the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy iu Sind's political situation was sought by Mr. G. M. Syed, leader of the Coalition party, in an urgent communication to them.

Shiekh Mohd. Abdulla, President of the Kashmir National Conference, was sentenced to three years' simple imprisonment by the Sessions Judge of Kashmir.

Lord Pethic Lawrence, Secretary of State for india, stated in London that although the relations between Britain and India were changing, they were not changing for the worse.

Addressing the Bombay Rotary Club, Sir Homi Mody, President of the India Council of World Affairs, dwelt on the foreign policy of free India and expressed the hope that the Interim Government would recognise the early necessity of setting up a Diplomatic Service in India.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah declared at Bombay that India stands at the brink of a ruinous civil war involving her four hundred million Hindus, Muslims and small minorities which only prompt sincere and skilled diplomatic negotiations could avert.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee met H. E. the Viceroy and discussed the riot situation in Eastern Bengal.

11th. His Excellency the Viceroy invited Mr. Jinnah, the Muslim League President to New Delhi for talks with him.

Four more members of the Interim Government, Mr C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. John Matthai, Mr. C. H. Bhabba, and Sir Shaffat Ahmed Khan were sworn in to-day.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a press interview, emphasised that he had not refused to enter the Interim Government and stated that "what is required to meet the situation is a definite and categorical statement regarding the points in dispute."

The Bengal Congress Assembly Party met to-day and decided to move a motion of "no confidence" against the Bengal Ministry.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, in an interview on the political situation of the country, stressed the need for a sincere desire of co-operation between the Congress and the Muslim League for a peaceful settlement of the communal problem.

The Committee of Action of the Muslim League decided to depute the Khan of Mamdot to meet Mr. Jinnah to discuss matters relating to their Direct Action programme.

12th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah accepted the Viceroy's invitation to go to Delhi for further discussions.

The Governor of Sind dissolved the Sind Legislative Assembly.

Two "no-confidence" motions, one against the entire Ministry and the other against the Chief Minister individually, tabled by the Congress Party, were admitted in the Bengal Legislative Assembly to-day. The debate on the motions was fixed to be held on Sept. 19 and 20.

The adjournment motion by the Congress Party to censure the Bengal Government for its failure to maintain law and order in the city from August 16 for full four days was admitted in the Bengal Legislative Council.

Invitation to 32 countries to the Inter Asian Relations Conference to be held in Delhi from February 15 to March 31, 1947 were issued by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru.

Dr. Rajendra Prosad, Food Member, addressing the officials of the Central Food Department, dwelt on the policy to be adopted for solving the food crisis and urged that the time had come when inflation in prices of agricultural products should be checked.

Sir Shaffat Ahmed Khan, Health and Education Member, at a meeting of the Central Education Department, observed that universal compulsory basic education according to the Sargent Plan should be taken in hand and the foundation of a national system of education must be firmly laid without delay.

13th. The Orissa Assembly passed a non-official resolution recommending to the

Government to take immediate steps for bringing into form the Prohibition Act of 1937, so as to introduce Prohibition in the entire province.

The normalcy in the situation in Calcutta was disturbed when cases of stabbing and stray assault occurred in the northern part of the city.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Member, External Affairs Interim Government, issued orders for the stoppage of air and artillery bombardment of tribesmen in South Waziristam (N. W. F. P.)

In a circular letter to all Provincial Congress Committees, Dr. Keskar and Mrs. Mridula Sarabhai, General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress laid down certain suggestions for the celebration of Gandhi Jayanti Week.

The Calcutta Disturbances Commission of Enquiry Bill which proposed to vest the Commission appointed by the Bengal Government to enquire into the recent riots in the city with powers of a Civil Court was introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council by the Finance Minister.

The attitude of the Socialist Party towards the new Central Government and the reasons for his acceptance of membership of the Congress Working Committee was explained by Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the socialist leader.

The British Cabinet rejected Mr Jinnah's suggestion that the Prime Minister should initiate a series of conferences with him in London.

14th. The view that only a Congress-League Coalition in Sind will ensure a stable Ministry was expressed by the Premier, Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah and Mr. M. A. Khurro.

The personnel of the Indian States Negotiating Committee, envisaged in the Cabinet Delegation's proposals of May 16, were announced.

The "*New York Times*" in an editorial declared that the installation of the first all Indian Government was "a milestone on the road to freedom," but that the dark clouds under which Pandit Nehru's Council assembled remain as dark as ever." It added, "Pakistan in not a workable plan but a dream of political in-experience. If it was established, India will fall apart."

The Working Committee of the All-India Forward Block met at Delhi for the first time since the Government removed the ban. Sardar Sardul Singh Cavesheer presided.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-Chancellor of the Renares Hindu University, unveiling a full-size bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Karachi, said: 'The role that Mahatma Gandhi has played in the present epoch, making the resurrection of the Indian nation and its transition from a state of serfdom to one of freedom will be remembered in the pages of history by later generations of Indians with pride and reverence."

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari called on Mahatma Gandhi and had busy talks with him.

The case against Mr. Monilal Doshi, a former officer of the Azad Hind Government was withdrawn by the Burma Government.

Six persons were killed and 37 injured as a result of stabbings and firing by unknown persons in Bombay.

Communal trouble resulting in police firing was reported from Dacca.

15th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah arrived in New Delhi from Bombay.

A resolution demanding of the Interim Government the total withdrawal of British and foreign troops from India was passed by the Working Committee of the All India Forward Bloc.

Communal trouble flared up in Ahmedabad, when 2 persons were killed and 3 injured.

Bombay was quiet except for a few cases of stray assault.

Disturbances on a minor scale continued in Dacca.

A resolution protesting against the non-recognition of the right of the Shias to separate representation in the Constituent Assembly was passed at a meeting of the All Parties Shia Conference.

16th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah met H. E. The Viceroy. The interview lasted 75 minutes.

Sir Frederick Bourne, the new Governor of the C. P. assumed office to-day

Col. Niranjan Singh Gill, at a press Conference, repeated the Sikh Community's pledge of unqualified support to the Congress in its struggle for freedom and reiterated his strong opposition to Pakistan or Sikhistan.

The police raided the headquarters of the Bengal provincial Branch of the Communist Party of India at Calcutta.

Mr. Husseinbhoy Laljee, President of the All Parties Shia Conference, claimed better representation of the Shia Muslims in the Legislatures and the Central Government.

The adjudication of the dispute between the Railway Board and the All-India Railwaymen's Federation commenced at Bombay.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government in a letter to Mr. V. V. Giri, Labour Minister of Madras stressed the need for uniform labour legislation throughout India and the desirability of holding an All-India Conference of all Provincial Labour Ministers to achieve this end.

The Working Committee of the All-India Forward Bloc asserted that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was alive and would re-appear at the opportune time.

17th. The Congress Party's adjournment motion to censure Government on its failure to maintain law and order during the Calcutta riots was defeated in the Bengal Council by 29 to 17 votes.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Minister for Industries and Supplies, presiding over a meeting of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research at New Delhi, explained the policy to be adopted for the industrialisation of India in the near future.

The situation in Dacca deteriorated as a result of further recrudescence of trouble.

The police opened fire on rioters in Bombay.

18th. The Standing Committee of the All-India States' People's Conference, under the presidentship of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, reiterated its demands for representation of States' people on the States Negotiating Committee and for constitutional reforms in the States in line with the rest of India.

The appointment of Mr. Terence Shone, C. M. G. as the first British High Commissioner to India was officially announced.

Pt. Jawharlal Nehru, in a directive to all Congressmen in connection with the "Gandhi Jayanti", said, "we must repudiate ourselves anew to the great cause of India's freedom and human emancipation, for which the Mahatma has stood, by earnest effort in furthering the constructive activities which he has so much at heart."

Dr. Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, M. L. A. (Central) died at Calcutta.

Sardar Swaran Singh, the newly elected leader of the Panthic Party in the Punjab Assembly, was sworn in as Minister of the Punjab Coalition Cabinet.

Chowdhury Akbar Khan, Muslim President of the London Indian Workers' Association, in a statement denounced the Muslim League as hypocrites and the Hindu Caste system as causing immense harm to India.

Stabbings, stray assaults, arson etc. continued unabated in Dacca.

19th. The debate on the two "no confidence" motions, one against the entire Ministry and the other against the Chief Minister himself, commenced in the Bengal Assembly.

Sardar Baldev Singh assumed charge of office as the first Indian Defence Member.

The Bengal Legislative Council considered the Calcutta Disturbances Commission of Enquiry Bill (1946).

Speaking at the open meeting of the Trade Policy Committee, Mr. C. H. Bhabha, Commerce Member, dwelt on the Interim Government's four point programme with regard to the future trade policy of India.

The Executive Committee of the Congress Socialist Party met at Delhi under the presidentship of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia.

20th. The Calcutta Disturbances Commission of Enquiry Bill 1946 was passed in the Bengal Legislative Council.

The "no-confidence" motion moved in the Bengal Assembly against the League Ministry was lost by 131 to 87 votes. The other motion against the Chief Minister was also defeated by 130 to 85 votes. The European group and the Communist members remained neutral.

The first full meeting of India's new Cabinet with all the 12 members and the Viceroy was held at New Delhi.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, in an press interview, called for "an immediate radical change in the frontier policy of the Government of India" involving some four and a half million tribesmen of the N. W. F. P.

Mr. Achyut Patwardhan was elected General Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party in place of Mr. Jai Prakash Narayan.

Mahatma Gandhi in an interview at Delhi reiterated his belief that the philosophy of non-violence was essential for communal harmony.

21st. The Congress Working Committee, at its meeting considered a three-point agenda for the A. I. C. C. session on September 23—ratification of the Working Committee's decision to form an Interim Government, Presidentship of the Congress and continuation of the members of the Interim Government as members of the Working Committee.

Mr. Jinnah received a letter from the Military Secretary to the Viceroy which contained an invitation to meet Mr. Wavell.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru sent a personal message to the Acting Secretary of State in Washington appealing to him to expedite food shipments in view of the grave food situation in India.

The Muslim League Committee of Action adopted a resolution directing the Provincial Muslim Leagues in Congress-governed provinces to set up Relief Committees in the provinces for providing relief and assistance to the Mussalmans.

The situation in Dacca deteriorated. Mob attacks, loot, arson, stabings etc. continued unabated. Curfew was imposed on the affected localities.

22nd. Mahatma Gandhi celebrated his 78th birthday. Greetings from all parts of India were conveyed to him.

The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha at its meeting at Calcutta, with Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee presiding, adopted a resolution congratulating the British Cabinet on its wisdom in installing the new Central Government.

The strike of the workers on the S. I. Railway was called off.

Communal trouble flared up in Calcutta as a result of a serious armed mob attack on a house in the northern part of the City.

The need to re-establish the Planning and Development Department by the Government of India "under a personality of high standing in the industrial sphere to plan the industrial life of the country and tackle problems connected with it" was stressed by Dr. L. C. Jariwala addressing the Central Committee of the All-India Manufacturers' Organisation at Bombay.

23rd. The All-India Congress Committee met at Ramjas College Hall, Delhi with Pt. Jawharlal Nehru in the Chair. The Committee discussed and passed the draft resolution prepared by the Working Committee ratifying its direction to the Congress President to form the Interim Government. Later, Pandit Nehru announced his resignation of the Congress Presidentship.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Food Member, in a broadcast, dwelt on the grave food situation in India and explained the efforts needed to meet the crisis. He said, "There were three ways of facing this calamity, First, to increase production of crops; second, to secure assistance from abroad; and third to distribute the incidence of shortage evenly and equitably."

As a result of large scale stabbings and assaults which broke out again in Calcutta, 9 persons were killed and 54 injured. Police opened fire at several places.

Mr. Morarji Desai, Home Minister of Bombay, charged the Muslim League as wholly responsible for the riots in Bombay as a result of the poisonous propaganda carried by them in favour of Pakistan and against the solution of the Indian problen.

24th. The A. I. C. C. session concluded after passing by a large majority Pandit Gobinda Vallabh Pant's resolution permitting members of the Interim Government to be members of the Congress Working Committee. The motion was opposed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the socialist members. The resolution was passed by 135 votes to 80.

Sir Samuel Runganadhan, Indian delegate to the Peace Conference at Paris, urged that India, being one of those countries which took substantial part in liberating the colonies, should take part in discussions on equal footing with the Council of Foreign Ministers.

An informal meeting of members of the A. I. C. C., the Constituent Assembly, and others from Indian States, who were interested in the distribution of provinces on linguistic and cultural basis was held with Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya as chairman.

The Working Committee of the Jamiat-ul-ulema at its meeting strongly condemned the recent riots in Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmebabad and other parts of India.

Stray assaults, organised mob attacks etc. although on minor scale, continued in Calcutta. Casualties for the day were 1 dead and 14 injured.

The situation in Dacca was tense as a result of large scale attacks, looting, arson etc. by "hooligans."

25th. The Congress Working Committee accepted Pandit Nehru's resignation from the Presidentship of the Congress and requested him to continue his duties till the election of the new President. The Committee further passed a resolution asking Provincial Governors to send proposals for reform of the land system which should begin with the abolition of the Zamindaries.

Mr. Jinnah had an interview with the Viceroy for about 2 hours.

The need for organising Congress Volunteer corps on sound lines in the various provinces was emphasised by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru at New Delhi.

A deputation of the Scheduled Caste Federation, Delhi Province, met Mr. Jinnah and placed before him the Federation's point of view regarding the political situation.

Disturbances continued at Dacca. Police opened fire at several places.

Calcutta was comparatively quiet.

26th. In his first Press Conference as Minister of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, outlined the foreign policy of India, Indian foreign relations, plans for the creation of an Indian Foreign Service to man diplomatic, consular and commercial posts in foreign countries as well as in the British Empire, the problem of the tribal areas of the N. W. F. P. and reforms in Baluchistan were some of the vital points dwelt with by Pandit Nehru in his speech.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi had special interviews with the Viceroy.

Sir Shaafat Ahmed Khan, Health Minister declared at Delhi that democratisation of the public health service in India and co-ordination of both preventive and curative aspects was the policy of the Interim Government.

A suggestion that the "basis of the rupee value should be gold direct and not gold through sterling or dollar" was made by Sir Chunilal B. Mehta, giving him views on the fixing of the par value of the Indian rupee.

A motion recommending the abolition of zamindaris in the province was discussed in the C. P. Legislative Assembly.

Seven persons died and 19 others were injured as a result of further recrudescence of stray assaults in Calcutta. The Bengal Premier, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy made a fervent appeal to the Hindus and Muslims to stop this fratricidal war and restore peace and goodwill in the city.

The situation in Dacca was unchanged.

27th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru had another meeting with the Viceroy. Later Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel met Mahatma Gandhi and discussed with him the possibility of the League's participation in the Central Government.

In the Bombay Assembly, Mr. B. G. Kher, the Premier, made a brief survey of the riots in Bombay and appealed to the public for mutual co-operation in restoring peace and goodwill.

On the eve of the formation of the Burmese Interim Government, Pandit Nehru sent the following message to the people of Burma: "I expect this will rapidly lead to the freedom and independence of Burma and also to control relations between our two countries."

In a message to the people of India, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru referred to the terrible tragedy in Calcutta as a result of the recent riots and urged the immediate need for relief and rehabilitation of the victims.

Stabbings and assaults continued unabated in Calcutta. Eight persons died and 20 others were injured.

28th. Drastic action by the Government to stop the acts of lawlessness which were taking place in Calcutta and other places in East Bengal was urged by Mr. Kiran Shankar Roy, Leader of the Opposition, in a blunt and unequivocal statement in the Bengal Legislative Assembly before the conclusion of the Budget session.

Mr. Jinnah had a third interview with the Viceroy.

The "*Manchester Guardian*" to-day warned that if Britain wants India's friendship, it will have to be earned. "We shall have to work hard to win it and to induce her to forget the past," it declared.

Stray assaults, although on reduced scale, continued in Calcutta.

29th. The Government of Bengal promulgated an order under the D. I. Rules banning the publication, printing, and distributing of news relating to communal riots in Bengal, "which is likely to provoke one section of the people against another."

Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, secretary of the India League, London, in his interview with the Soviet Foreign Minister M. Molotov at Paris, discussed the possibility of food shipments from Russia and future establishment of full diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The Maharaja of Kolhapur died at Bombay.

Dr Rammanohar Lohia the socialist Leader, was arrested at Colem in connection with the civil liberties movement in Goa.

In his "*Harijan*", Mahatma Gandhi condemned the modern play of power politics in the world especially in Great Britain and America.

Representatives of various Calcutta newspapers at a meeting decided to suspend publication of papers from October, as a protest against the Government's restriction on publication of riot news of Bengal.

Except for a few incidents, Calcutta was quiet.

The Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, had separate interviews with Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

30th Addressing the Mysore Representative Assembly, Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, the Dewan, reviewed the industrial and economic needs of the State and the steps taken to meet the food shortage.

Sir Frederick Tymnes, Director General of Civil Aviation, Government of India, addressing the members of the S. I. Chamber of Commerce, expressed the opinion that it was the intention of the Government of India to retain the Hindusthan Aircraft Factory at Bangalore as a nucleus for the future aircraft manufacturing industry in this country.

The Orissa Assembly, in a resolution, decided to shift the provincial capital to Bhubaneswar.

Oetober 1946

"Gandhi Jayanti" was celebrated all over India.

Total Prohibition was introduced in the Madras Province.

India was debated at the Conference of Conservatives at Blackpool.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met Mr. Jinnah at the residence of the Nawab of Bhopal.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, President, A. I States' People's Conference said that there was a "wide political awakening in the Indian States."

Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member urged "complete Indianisation of the armed forces."

Dr. Rammonohar Lohia was released.

Pandit Nehru met the members of the Indian delegation to the U. N. General Assembly.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member addressed the Standing Committee of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference.

The Indian Delegation to the United Nations Conference left for New York.

The Calcutta "Disturbances" Commission of Enquiry had its first sitting.

Serious lawlessness and mob violence commenced in several districts of Noakhali and Tiperrah.

The Muslim League decided to join the Interim Government.

"Complete freedom for India in two years" was forecast by Prof. Harold Laski at New York.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, accompanied by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb began his tour of the tribal areas in N. W. F. P.

Acharya Kripalani was officially announced as the Congress President.

"Azad Hind Government" Day was celebrated throughout India.

Acharya Kripalani began his aerial visit of the riot affected areas in East Bengal.

There was a sudden flare-up of communal trouble in Calcutta.

The Congress Working Committee discussed the riot situation in East Bengal and passed a number of resolutions.

Mr. Jinnah condemned the disturbances in the country and appealed for soberance

The portfolios allotted to the Muslim League members of the Interim Government were announced.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan explained the Muslim League's intentions in entering the Interim Government.

The Muslim League members of the Central Government were sworn in.

Pt. Nehru was elected leader of the Congress Assembly Party.

Communal riots broke out in Chapra Town (Behar)

The Autumn session of the Central Legislative Assembly commenced.

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan urged a Congress-League Coalition Government at the Centre.

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Calcutta on a visit to the riot-affected areas of East Bengal.

Situation in Calcutta deteriorated considerably.

The Viceroy, Lord Wavell arrived in Calcutta.

1st. Mr. M. K Vellodi, Deputy High Commissioner of India, speaking on the cotton textile control in India at London, said that there was hardly any country in the world that afforded greater scope for activities of the black-marketeer than India. He further explained the reasons for the cloth shortage in India.

A meeting of Calcutta newspaper editors and proprietors adopted a resolution requesting the Bengal Government to withdraw their order controlling the publication of news on communal disturbances in the province, "so that the Press Advisory Committee may act independently and in an unprejudiced manner."

2nd. "Gandhi Jayanti" was celebrated all over India. Meetings were held in a number of places and tributes were paid to Gandhiji's services to the country.

Mr. Jinnah's meeting with the Viceroy lasted 50 minutes. Later, Mr. Jinnah had discussions with the League Council of Action.

The Bombay Legislative Assembly passed the Bill providing for the removal of social disabilities of Harijans with incorporation of amendments to widen its scope and making adequate provisions for penalties against defaulters.

Total Prohibition in eight districts were introduced in the Madras province to-day.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Minister for Industries and supplies, speaking at a reception given to him, stressed the ways and means of restoring peace in the country in order to solve the communal problem.

Mahatma Gandhi in his prayer speech condemned the action of the Goan authorities in arresting Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, the socialist leader.

3rd. Speaking at a Gandhi birthday luncheon in Birmingham, Dr. D. R. Prem, Chairman of the Birmingham India League, asked the Labour Government to begin the progress of transferring power to India by closing the India office.

Sir C. B. Mehta, in a press interview, favoured the immediate depreciation of the external par value of the rupee to the extent allowed by the Bretton Woods Agreement, because of the uncertainty over recovery of India's sterling balances.

Sir B. L. Mitter, Dewan of Baroda, urged the Indian States' participitation in the Constituent Assembly even if some members from British India chose to be absent from it.

4th. India was debated at the Conference of Conservatives held at Blackpool to-day. Mr. Dougles Reid, who had been for six years a member of the Madras Legislature, described the Conservative official resolution on India as having a taint of patronage and superiority, which took away any effectiveness that it might have. He told the Conference that "the Conservative Party is to-day hated in India."

Thirty-six persons were killed and 81 injured as a result of a serious railway accident at Ongole station, 182 miles from Madras City.

5th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Mr. M. A. Jinnah met each other at the residence of the Nawab of Bhopal, and talked for over three hours about the political crisis.

Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, personal representative in Europe of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, speaking at a Gandhi birthday celebration in London, said, "Though we have a Government at New Delhi led by Pt. Nehru and his colleagues, we are still far from Independence."

Mr. V. V. Giri, the Madras Labour Minister, expressed the hope that the Prohibition scheme introduced to the province, designed to bring economic prosperity to the people, would be a complete success if the public gave their earnest and sincere desire to it.

A memorandum, demanding the establishment of responsible government, restoration of civil and religious liberties, proportionate representation of Hindus in all Government departments and accession of Hyderabad to the proposed Indian Union was submitted by a deputation of the All-Indian States' Hindu Mahasbha to Sir Mirza Ismail, President of the Nizam's Executive Council.

6th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, in a statement, warned the Indian people against certain speeches delivered at the British Conservative Party's Conference which indicated a hostile attitude on the part of some leading members of the Party towards the Interim Government of India. He added that the speeches made were irresponsible, full of malice and calculated to stir up strife and prevent unity and settled Government in India.

The new textile policy sponsored by the Madras Premier, Mr. G. Prakasam, preventing the expansion of textile mills in the Province was considered "premature" by the Working Committee of the Tamil Nad Congress Committee.

Mr. Dwarkanath Kachru, General Secretary of the All-India States' People's Conference, met Mahatma Gandhi and discussed with him conditions in Kashmir State.

Addressing a gathering of tribesmen, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the Frontier Congress Leader, strongly criticised the Muslim League propaganda carried out in collaboration with the British who, in his opinion, were misleading the Muslims in the name of Islam.

Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya, President of the All-India States' People's Conference, giving his impressions on his recent tour to some of the Indian States, said that there was a wide political awakening among the people there.

Presiding over the ninth anniversary of the Lakshmipuram Young Men's Association at Royapettah, Madras, Sir S V Ramamurthi dwelt on India's new status in the future world and called upon the youth community to look to the future of India with a determination to make it a glorious one.

7th. The second Nehru—Jinnah meeting commenced at the residence of the Nawab of Bhopal. The talks lasted 90 minutes.

Mr. B. R. Sen, Additional Secretary, Food Control Department, addressing a gathering of Provincial and State Representatives, urged the need for improvement of storage facilities of food grains in India.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League held a two-hour session under the presidentship of Mr. Jinnah

Sir Rm. Alagappa Chettiar, President of the S. I. Chamber of Commerce, strongly protested against the policy of the Madras Government not to encourage further expansion of the mill industry in the Province and appealed to the Premier to withdraw the recent statement made by him on this subject, as such a policy would spell disaster to the industrial development in the Province.

Reviewing India's contribution to the Empire Dollar Pool, the Government of India issued a Press Note explaining their import policy from and outside the sterling area.

Refuting the suggestion made by Mr. Butler at the recent Conservatires'

Conference at Blackpool that the Anglo-Indian community were keeping themselves aloof from other sections of the Indian people, Mr. Frank Anthony, President of the Anglo-Indian Association, released the full text of the letter addressed by him to Mr. Butler.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member, expressed the view at Allahabad that the prevailing labour unrest in the country was inevitable in view of the existing inflation and high prices of food-stuffs and that measures for dealing with this contingency were receiving the careful attention of the Government.

Mahatma Gandhi in his post prayer speech referred to the recent negotiations between Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah and expressed the hope that the Muslim League would join the Interim Government.

Babu Sampurnanand, Education Minister, U. P. suggested the application of economic pressure against Portuguese India as a retaliatory measure against the alleged ill-treatment of Indian nationals in Goa.

8th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari met Mahatma Gandhi and held prolonged discussion with him.

Dr. William C. Johnstone, Chief Public Officer for India of U. S. State Department's Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, who arrived in Bombay to-day, said in an interview that he was happy to be in India at a "crucial stage of cultural relations between the United States and India."

Sir Henry Twynham, former Governor of the C. P., declared at Liverpool that he was not optimistic about an early settlement of the Indian problem. "The aims of Muslims and Hindus are so divergent that any possibility of agreement is removed," he said.

Addressing a meeting of the Madras branch of the India Council of World Affairs, Dr. A. Appadorai, Secretary of the Council, spoke about the important tasks ahead of the Constituent Assembly and stressed the need for the Assembly to define exactly the subjects which the Union Government should administer in framing the future constitution of India.

An appeal to the public, inviting the fullest co-operation of all voluntary workers, monied persons, and the Press to make the forthcoming session of the Indian National Congress an unprecedented success was made by several Congress leaders, including Pandit Nehru, Pandit Govinda Vallabh Pant, Acharya Kripalani, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and other members of the U. P. Congress Committee.

A meeting of the All India Spinners' Association was held at Harijan colony, Delhi. Mahatma Gandhi, who was present, laid great stress on greater production of khadi to meet the requirements of the country in the days of acute cloth shortage.

9th. In a broadcast to India's armed forces, Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member, Interim Government, said, "Complete Indianisation of the armed forces will now be speeded at an accelerated pace compatible with efficiency and our only concern will be to maintain and better the excellence of the standard you yourselves have built up." The Defence Member also expressed the hope that the British officers in the army would offer their help and co-operation in this great task.

Sir Samuel Runganadhan, the Indian delegate, addressing the plenary session of the Peace Conference at Paris, said that the first task was to free the world from aggression and threat of aggression. Secondly, it had to make a positive contribution to the establishment of lasting peace. "We must remove the causes that lead to war, whether political or economic," he said.

A reshuffle in the present Madras Congress Ministry in view of "opposite camps" in the Congress Legislative Party was suggested by Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao in a press interview.

Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayengar, speaking at a public meeting at Madras, urged the Premier, Mr. Prakasam to retrace the step he has taken to prevent the expansion of textile mill industry in the province.

Mr. Dharma Vira, Textile Commissioner for India, expressed the view that it was the systematic policy of the Government of India to gradually remove war-time controls and that every effort was being made for increasing the production of cloth in the country.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru had an interview with Sir Olaf Caroe, Governor of N. W. F. P. and discussed wtth him the arrangements for his (Pt. Nehru's) visit to the Frontier.

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia was released. An externment order prohibiting his entry in Goa for five years was served on him.

10th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru inaugurated the Health Ministers' Conference at New Delhi. The Conference passed a resolution endorsing that the objective proposed by the Bhore Committee should be kept in view in formulating plans for a National Health Service. Pandit Nehru, in course of his speech, stressed the point that health is a basic problem which forms the foundation of a nation's edifice and if the foundation is weak, the building is likely to collapse. The Health Member, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, also addressed the Conference.

The Bombay Legislative Assembly to-day passed the Bombay Industrial Relations Bill.

Speaking at a meeting of the History and Politics Association of the Madras Christian College, Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar criticised the Cabinet Mission's plan "as a loosely worded State Document" and said that it would be necessary for the Constituent Assembly at its first meeting to anticipate as many of the difficulties as possible and adopt resolutions calculated to get over them.

Bishop Edwin F. Lee of the American Methodist Mission, speaking at a Gandhi birthday celebration in Singapore, said, 'Mahatma Gandhi has pulled down for our use great ideas and ideals. Gandhi has been heard; he is being heard; and he will be heard with profit across many years by a wide section of humanity."

11th. Pt. Jawharlal Nehru, in a statement, expressed his conviction, based on a letter received by him from Colonel Habibur Rahman, that all rumours suggesting that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose is alive, are without foundation.

Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Commerce Member, Interim Government speaking at a reception given by the Indian Merchants' Chamber, expressed his willingness to meet representatives of the commercial community at all times and exchange views with them. Through the joint efforts of the Government of India and the commercial community, he said, trade and commerce could be placed on a high pedestal.

The South India Millowners' Association, at its meeting, passed a resolution strongly protesting against the policy of the Madras Government regarding the ban on the construction of new mills and on the expansion of existing mills in the province.

Further recrudescence of communal trouble occurred in Dacca. A 72-hour curfew was imposed on the affected areas.

12th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah had an interview with the Viceroy. The interview lasted 85 minutes.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Bengal Premier, expressed the Bengal Government's determination to fight the Government of India's decision with regard to jute prices and added that even if the Muslim League entered the Interim Government, and if the present policy continued, he would have to fight it for the sake of the cultivator.

Addressing the Convocation of the Mysore University, Dr. Sir Lakshmanswami Mudaliar explained the role the Universities play in education and pointed out that "it is to these Universities that one should look for the finest qualities of leadership in every sphere of activity."

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru met the members of the Indian Delegation to the U. N. O. Assembly and discussed with them matters likely to come up at the conference.

An assurance that any handicaps placed in the way of the development of Indian shipping or ship-building would disappear as soon as possible, was given by Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Commerce Member, at Bombay.

The abolition of the Civil Branch of the Indian Medical Service and adequate provision for research and the application of scientific method for the investigation of the indigenous system of medicine was the subject-matter of two resolutions adopted by the Health Ministers' Conference which concluded to-day.

Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, the Congress Socialist leader, expressed the view at Calcutta that a coalition with the League at the Centre would injure Congress fundamentals still further.

Four persons were killed and 10 others were injured in disturbances in Dacca to-day.

13th. Mr. Jinnah had further discussions with the Viceroy on the subject of the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government.

The Muslim League Working Committee, at its meeting, adopted a resolution strongly condemning the recent bombing on the Muslims of Waziristan (N. W. F. P.) and expressed its sincere sympathies with the sufferers there.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member and Member for Information and Broadcasting, addressing the Standing Committee of All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, said, "The Press must have unfettered freedom in the presentation of news and expression of views, but it also has the obligation to preserve the integrity of the State and support the legitimate activities of a popular Government. It must, when occasion demands, hold the Government in defeating the forces of disruption." The Home Member also referred to the Government's intention of setting up a Committee for modification of Press laws and so bring them in line with those of other free countries.

The Indian delegation to the United Nations Conference left for New York.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Member in-charge of Works, Mines and Power, Interim Government, addressing the first All-India Physical Educational Conference at Amraoti, urged for compulsory military training and the creation of a physical culture consciousness among Indian Youth so as to be able to act vigorously and sustain a considerable amount of physical strain.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations Conference at New York, in a Press Conference challenged General Smuts' reference to the South African Indian issue and his claim of the spiritual leadership of Europe in his speech at Brussels. She pointed out that the "S. African Indian issue was a fundamental human issue and it must go before the bar of world opinion; no one individual, however great, should deal with it."

In an interview at Bombay, Miss Margaret Ballinger, Member of the S. African Parliament, referred to the "Indian problem in South Africa as not only racial but also economic to a certain extent. She also expressed the view "that the colour bar and racial inequality which exist in the Union of S. Africa were bound to go as these were against the canons of modern civilisation."

Dacca was quiet.

14th. The Calcutta "Disturbances" Commission of Enquiry consisting of Sir Patrick Spens, Chief Justice of India (President of the Commission), Sir Saiyed Fazl Ali, Chief Justice, Patna High Court, and Mr. B. Somayya, ex-Judge, Mrdras High Court, had its first sitting at Belvedere, Calcutta.

Addressing the Labour Ministers' Conference at New Delhi, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member, Interim Government, outlined the main problems facing labour administration in the country and pointed out the need and scope for co-ordinated policies between the Provinces, the Centre and the States, in matters of labour legistation. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, who inaugurated the conference, also spoke on the need for improving the working condition of labour in the country.

Answering a question on the food situation in India in the House of Commons, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-Secretary of State for India, pointed out that in the next few months the food position would be particularly critical especially in Southern India.

"Although we have to contend against a strong team in F.M. Smuts and Mr. Hofmeyer, we Indians are no bad fighters and we have truth and justice behind us," observed Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the U. N. O. Assembly, at Karachi, on her way to the United States.

The Standing Committee of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference concluded its session after passing several resolutions.

Sir Manubhai Mehta, ex-Dewan of Baroda and Bikaner died at Bombay.

The need for sending a trade delegation to East Africa and Middle East and for following a less stringent export policy was urged by Mr. Dawood H, Nasser, President of the Africa and Overseas Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, who led a deputation to Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Commerce Member.

Terrible lawlessness and mob violence on Hindus, involving mass murder, looting, arson, forcible mass conversion, abduction of women and desecration of places of worship were reported from several districts of Noakhali (East Bengal). Armed police were despatched and the military were called out as precautionary measure.

15th. The Muslim League decided to join the Interim Government. The following were appointed as members of the Government :—Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Mr. I. I. Chundrigar, Mr. Abdur Rab Nistar, Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan and Mr. Jogendra Nath Mondal. In order to make it possible to reform the cabinet, the following members tendered their resignation :—Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer.

The abolition of the Salt Tax, which was expected to serve as the first tangible indication to the masses of India of the *de facto* transfer of power to a popular Government at the centre was decided upon at a meeting of the Interim Cabinet.

An earnest hope that the great American Nation will not allow President Truman to succumb to the influence of Jewry and be a party to force and perpetuate the gravest wrong done to the Arab of Palestine was expressed by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a telegram to Mr. Uzzuldin Alnaqib, Vice-President of the Iraq Chamber of Deputies, Baghdad.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilangam Chettiar, Minister for Education, Madras, addressing the Convocation of the Annamalai University, dwelt on the true function of education and pointed out that the essence of education should be to infuse a spirit of service among the students.

The situation in Noakhali was serious. Mob violence spread to the neighbouring districts of Tipperah. Police opened fire on several occasions. A heavy exodus of affected people to safer zones continued.

16th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru arrived at Peshawar on a tour to the tribal areas.

A two day conference of representatives of Provincial Governments and the Central Pay Commission opened at New Delhi.

The text of the correspondence between Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah was released to the Press.

Mr. Jogendra Nath Mondal, Member-Designate of the Interim Government, said at Calcutta, "I feel that the injustice done to the Scheduled Castes by the British Cabinet Mission and the Congress has been undone by this act of the Muslim League."

"Complete freedom for India in two years" was forecast by Prof. Harold Laski at New York. He said, "Free India would be a greater asset than an enslaved India. Free India would be a boon to the Far East."

Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, addressing a gathering of Indian students at London, said, "You must use your freedom and independence to achieve real prosperity of the people of your country, to do away with internal poverty and misery and make India one of the great homes of civilisation. I am sure that India can become the beacon-light of human freedome, prosperity and happiness which will be the lasting glory for the human race."

Mr. L. A. Freak, presiding over the Council meeting of the Indian Road Congress at Karachi, emphasised the need for more funds in order to construct more and better roads and suggested that Government should hypothicate certain taxes like import duties on motor vehicles, petrol tax, motor vehicle tax, etc. solely for financing roads.

Members of the Scheduled Castes Federation met Mr. Jinnah and conveyed to him their gratitude to the inclusion of Mr. J. N. Mondal in the Interim Government.

Mr. R. S. Ruikar, Member of the C. P. Legistative Assembly, in an interview with the Prime Minister of Eire, Mr. E.de Valera at Dublin, discussed the possibility of closer relation between Ireland and India.

Grave lawlessness continued in the districts of Noakhali and Tipperah. At least 5000 persons were killed and 50,000 were affected by other acts of lawlessness since October 10.

17th. The Calcutta Riots Enquiry Commission, presided over by Sir Patrick Spens, decided to hold its enquiry in public and passed final directions laying down the procedure and programme to be adopted during the enquiry.

Dewan Chamanlal, leader of the Indian Food Mission to Argentina, declared at New York: "India can and will play a decisive role in the destiny of the world divided as it is between two ideologies—The Anglo-American and Russian. A resurgent India, free and powerful, building up her basic and key industries, is and will be in a position to tilt the scales and therefore, the freedom of India is of vital importance to world peace."

A resolution demanding immediate withdrawal of British troops from India and Indian troops from foreign territories passed at a meeting of the India League, was sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee and the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick-Lawrence.

Addressing a gathering of tribesmen of Razmak (Waziristan) Pt. Jawharlal Nehru said, "Mine is a mission of love and peace and I have no desire to rule over you."

Mr. R. K. Nehru, Leader of the Indian Delegation, addressing the plenary session of the Preparatory Committee of the International Trade and Employment Conference at London, said that a minimum level of protection and tariffs was essential if India and other Asiatic countries are to take their rightful place in international economic co-operation.

Mahatma Gandhi in his prayer speech referred to the tragic happenings in East Bengal, especially the brutal atrocities committed against the Hindu women there. He advised the women that they should learn how to die first before a hair of their head could be injured.

Mob violence continued in the districts of East Bengal. Chandpur district was also affected. Murder, looting, arson, forcible conversion etc., of the Hindus occurred on a large scale. Unconverted people was also slaughtered. People lived in complete starvation.

18th. Acharya Kripalani, President-elect of the Indian National Congress, arrived in Calcutta. In course of a statement to the Press, he said, "My first task is to exert my utmost in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity so that the inhumanities and barbarities that recently disfigured and disgraced Calcutta and still do East Bengal become things of the past."

Mr. Dharma Vir, Textile Commissioner, Government of India, discussed with the members of the S. I. Millowners' Association matters affecting the textile industry and assured them full Government assistance in procuring raw material to increase cloth production.

The situation in East Bengal remained unchanged.

19th. The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League adopted a resolution strongly condemning the "acts of lawlessness, violence and murder that are being reported from certain parts of the districts of Noakhali and Tipperah."

Gratification at the Muslim League's entry in the Interim Government to share the responsibility in the service of the country was expressed by Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member, at Amritsar.

An "Anti-Pakistan" League whose proclaimed object was to counteract pro-Pakistan propaganda of the Muslim League organisation was formed at London.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, accompanied by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb returned to Peshawar after conclusion of their first tour of North and South Waziristan.

The Medical Council of India, at its session at Delhi, adopted a resolution "accpting in general the broad principles laid down by the Bhore Committee with reference to professional education."

Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Member designate of the Interim Government, addressing a gathering of students at Lahore, said. "We are going into the Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan and I assure you that we shall achieve Pakistan."

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in a statement on the Noakhali happenings, said, "The only method eradicating this evil (riots) is for the majority in an area to guarantee the security of the minority." He added, "I would make a special appeal to Muslim brethren in East Bengal. Islam enjoins that the protection of one's neighbour is one's religious duty."

The situation in East Bengal was still very grave, Acharya Kripalani accompanied by the Bengal Governor visited the affected parts there.

20th. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Food Member, made a nation-wide appeal for grain to every peasant, producer, landlord, trader and merchant—whoever might hold the stocks or surplus—to save the people of S. India in view of the grave food crisis there.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Frontier Congress leader, repeated a previous assertion that the disturbances which marked Pandit Nehru's study trip of the N. W. F. P. were the work of the Political Department."

Mob rule continued unabated in the disticts of Noakhali and Tipperah.

21st. An appeal to the youths of India and Bengal to organise themselves in every town and village, to take initiative themselves and to hurl back the forces of lawlessness and reaction, was made by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose in a statement.

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, made a second aerial visit of the riot-affected area in East Bengal.

"Azad Hind Government Day" was celebrated throughout India.

The Bengal Governor's report on the riots in Noakhali and Tipperah was read in the House of Commons by the Under Secretary of State, Mr. Arthur Henderson.

The Premier's Conference, on behalf of the Interim Government, to consider the question of replacement of I. C. S. and the I. P. by a suitable Central or Provincial Service met at New Delhi under the presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Home Member.

Grave lawlessness continued in the districts of East Bengal. Police opened fire at several places.

22nd. The Executive Council of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, at its meeting, called upon all law-abiding citizens to organise themselves for self-defence instead of depending on Governmental machineries 'which had failed to discharge its primary obligations of maintaining law and order in the province.'

Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon, Secretary of the India League, London asserted at New York that "India will be independent because she means to be independent."

The Indian Delegation to the U. N. O. General Assembly arrived at New York to-day.

There was a sudden flare-up of communal trouble in Calcutta.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes' leader, arrived in England on a political mission to seek remedy for the "injustice done to the Scheduled Castes by the Cabinet Mission's proposal.

The situation in East Bengal was unchanged. Loot, arson, murder, mass conversion spread to other neighbouring districts of Noakhali, Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President accompanied by Dr. P. C. Ghosh and others visited the riot affected areas of Tipperah.

23rd. An official communique issued in Delhi stated that the Governments of India and the U. S. A. have decided to raise the status of their respective diplomatic missions to the rank of Embassies.

Pandit Nehru returned to Delhi after completing his tour of the tribal areas of the N. W. F. P.

The riot situation in East Bengal was the dominant subject discussed at a five-hour meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

Sir G. S. Bajpai, Indian Agent-General in Washington, welcoming the decision to raise the status of diplomatic missions in Washington and New Delhi to Embassy rank, declared, "India will exert all the powers of her new and broadening freedom for the establishment of a just and enduring peace."

Cases of police clashes with rioters were reported from Noakhali in East Bengal. Police opened fire on several occasions.

Minor cases of stray assaults occurred in Calcutta.

24th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a statement, condemned the disturbances in the country and appealed for tolerance.

The Congress Working Committee, in a resolution on the Bengal situation, expressed deep horror and pain at the scene of bestiality and barbarity there and declared that the "outburst of brutality is the direct result of the politics of hate and civil strife carried out by the Muslim League. It added, "The Governor and the Governor-General who claim to possess special responsibilities in such matters must also share the burden for events in East Bengal."

Five persons were killed and 40 others injured in incidents in Calcutta.

The riot situation in East Bengal showed no signs of improvement. Tension prevailed every where,

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, announced that India would apply for membership of the U. N. O. security Council.

25th. The portfolios to be held by representatives of the Muslim League as members of the Interim Government were announced as follows :—Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan —Finance ; Mr. I. I. Chundrigar—Commerce : Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar—Communications, Post & Air ; Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan—Health ; Mr. Jogendra

Nath Mondal—Legislative. Consequent changes of the other portfolios were :— Dr. John Matthai—Industries and supplies ; Mr. C. Rajagopalachari—Education and Arts ; and Mr. C. H. Bhabba—Works, Mines & Power.

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, addressing the U. N. O. General assembly at New York, defined India's foreign policy which she said was opposed to racialism and exploitation.

Mrs. Margaret Ballinger, Member of the S. African Parliament, in an interview at Delhi, advised the Indian community in S. Africa not to boycott Parliament if they were not sure of the boycott being complete.

Arson and looting by hooligans on a mass scale were reported from the district of Chandpur (East Bengal). The situation in Noakhali and Tipperah was comparatively quiet.

Widespread trouble, involving stray assaults, stabbings, bomb attacks, use of fire arms by individuals occurred in Calcutta and Howrah. Eleven persons died and 45 others were injured during the day.

26th. Four Muslim League members of the Interim Government were sworn in to-day. Mr. J. N. Mondal, the Scheduled Caste representative from Bengal, took charge by telegram.

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan explained the Muslim League's intentions and ideals in entering the Interim Government.

Inaugurating the Provincial Students' Educational Convention at Madras, Mr. T. S. Avinashilangam Chettiar, Minister for Education, said that responsibilities of the students were very great in the building of a new India and appealed to them to be disciplined, strong and remain united in the service of the Motherland.

Disturbances in Calcutta and Howrah increased considerably Police fired on several occasions. The casualties for the day were 24 dead and over 60 injured.

No major incident of any sort were reported from the districts of Noakhali, Tipperah, Chandpur and other parts of East Bengal, although tension prevailed everywhere.

27th. Welcoming the Australian Industrial Delegation at New Delhi, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru spoke of the part which India was destined to play in the future trade relations between the two countries.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru was elected leader of the Congress Assembly Party at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Party at Delhi.

The view that there was no practical difficulty for the members of the Interim Government to work on the basis of joint responsibility under the leadership of one individual was expressed by Syed Ali Zaheer at Lucknow.

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, returned to Delhi after completing his tour of the riot-affected areas of East Bengal.

Dr. S. P. Mookherjee, on his return from the riot-affected areas of East Bengal, said at a Press Conference at Calcutta, "The events that have happened in Noakhali and Tipperah have certain unique features which are not common in India's chequered history of communal disturbances. Indeed what has happened is no communal riot at all, but a case of an organised and well planned attack on the minority community by the majority, whose chief aim was mass conversion, accompanied by loot, arson and wholesale desecration of all places and symbots of worship."

Communal riot broke out in Chapra town in Behar, resulting in 13 persons being killed and 40 others injured.

Recrudescence of trouble in Calcutta were on the increase. Large scale arson, looting, stabbings, and few cases of kidnapping too marked the day's events. Police and military opened fire at several places. The casualties for the day were 19 killed and over 100 injured.

28th. The Autumn Session of the Central Legislative Assembly, which commenced to-day, began the debate on a motion of the Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, approving India's continued membership of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The text of the correspondence between the Viceroy and Mr. Jinnah, which led to the participation of the Muslim League in the Interim Government, was released to the Press.

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, former member of the Interim Government, stated that a Congress-League Coalition Government at the Centre was a happy angury for the future.

His Excellency the Viceroy, in a broadcast from New Delhi, appealed to the people of India to end the communal strife and bring about a sense of peace and harmony which was essential for India's progress.

Disturbances in Chapra spread to other neighbouring villages. Troops were called out as a precautionary measure. The total casualties since the disturbances started were 115 killed and 160 injured.

The riot situation in Calcutta deteriorated considerably. At least 23 persons were killed and 151 injured in the day's incidents.

29th. The Central Legislative Assembly passed unanimously the Finance Member's motion that India continue her membership of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank.

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Calcutta on a visit to the riot-affected areas of East Bengal.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Member for External Affairs, made a reference in the Central Assembly to his recent tour of the N. W. F. P. and the tribal areas.

Rioting in Calcutta continued unchanged. The military were attacked by hostile mobs with bombs and fire arms. Police and military fired on several occasions. Casualties totalled 21 dead and 60 others injured.

The riot situation in Behar was comparatively quiet, although a tense atmosphere prevailed throughout the province.

30th. The Central Legislative Assembly continued to-day the discussion of the Labour Member's motion that the Bill amending the Trades Union Act be referred to a Select Committee.

The Government of India appointed Dr. M. A. Rauf, Bar-at-Law, as their representative in Burma.

Mr. Jinnah had an hour's interview with the Viceroy.

Mahatma Gandhi met Sir Frederick Burrows, the Bengal Governor and discussed with him the Calcutta and Noakhali situation for about two hours.

The Calcutta "Disturbances" Enquiry Commission, which held a brief sitting, adjourned until Nov. 14.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian Delegation to the U. N. O. Assembly, welcomed M. Molotov's (Russia) speech on India at the Assembly, which she referred to as "a sign of understanding and friendship between the two countries."

No further incidents of trouble were reported from Behar.

Rioting continued in Calcutta and Howrah. Nineteen persons were killed and 40 others injured. The Government of Bengal imposed collective fines on certain areas of Calcutta as a result of the disturbances.

31st. After a three day debate, the Central Legislative Assembly passed the Labour Member, Mr. Jagjivan Ram's motion to refer to Select Committee his Bill laying down conditions for the recognition of trade unions.

H. E. the Viceroy, Lord Wavell arrived in Calcutta. He had long discussion with the Bengal Governor about the riot situation in East Bengal.

The Bengal Government totally withdrew the exemption granted to the publication of matters communicated to the Press by the Press Advisory Committee, Bengal, under Government's order issued about a month ago, imposing certain restrictions on the publication of riot news of Bengal.

Ten persons were killed and 43 others injured in incidents in Calcutta, involving mostly murder, arson and military firing.

Further recrudescence of communal trouble occurred in Patna and Bhagalpur. About 90 persons were killed and 160 others injured. Troops were called out as a precautionary measure.

November 1946

The Viceroy began his tour of the riot affected areas of East Bengal.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar arrived in Calcutta on a peace mission.

Widespread rioting occurred in Bhagalpur.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under Secretary of State for India said that the total casualties in communal riots between July and October was 5,018 killed and 13,320 injured, excluding those in East Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi announced his intention of undertaking a fast if the riots did not stop in Behar.

Disturbances flared up in Pabna District.

The autumn session of the Council of State began.

The Viceroy began his aerial tour of the riot affected areas of Bihar.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya died in Benares.

Maulana Md. Akram Khan said : "For the tragedy of Bihar the responsibility lies on the Muslim League Government of Bengal which is practically a personal show of Mr. Suhrawardy."

A bilateral air transport agreement between the U. S. A. and India was signed at New Delhi.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah declared : "There is no possibility of an end to India's civil strife unless Pakistan is absolutely achieved."

Pt. Jawharlal Nehru celebrated his 57th. birthday.

The Nizam of Hyderabad issued an appeal to stop the fratricidal strife in the country.

Khwaja Nazimuddin was elected Deputy Leader of the Muslim League party in the Central Assembly.

The Committee of Action of the A. I. Muslim League condemned the brutal atrocities in Bihar and demanded an official enquiry into it.

Representatives of Indian States discussed at New Delhi the position of the States with regard to future constitution of India.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy retired as President of the Council of State.

Mr Jinnah declared that the Muslim League will not participate in the Constituent Assembly. He added, "by forcing this meeting......a situation has been created which will lead to serious consequences.

The Congress Working Committee met at Delhi and passed a number of resolutions.

The 54th. plenary session of the Indian National Congress was held at Meerut, Acharaya Kripalani presiding.

Exchange of population in order to avoid the "brutal slaughter" in the country was suggested by Mr. Jinnah at Karachi.

The British Cabinet invited the Viceroy and five members of the Interim Government for fresh discussions in London.

The British invitation to the Viceroy and Indian leaders was announced in both the Houses of Parliament.

The Congress decided not to accept the Viceroy's invitation.

Mr. Jinnah announced the formal acceptance by his party of H. M. Government's invitation for London talks.

Acharya Kripalani, Congress President announced the names of the members of the New Working Committee.

Pt Nehru decided to go to London for talks in response to a personal appeal from the British Premier.

Sardar Patel described Mr. Jinnah's proposal for exchange of population as "absurd".

1st. The Viceroy accompanied by the Bengal Governor left Calcutta for a tour of the riot affected areas of Noakhali and Tipperah.

Mahatma Gandhi sent a communication to Mr. H. S. Subrawardy, the Bengal Premier, containing certain proposals calculated to restore peace in Bengal for his consideration and acceptance.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru said in the Central Legislative Assembly that the whole activity of the Government of India ever since the South African Passive Resistance Movement started "has been one of giving moral support to that movement."

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, in a statement of the disturbances in the country, said, "I feel that humanity is at stake. Hindu culture and religion are in dager. The time has come for the Hindus to unite and to vitalise sources of help and succour and to make effective self-protection and self-assertion."

The situation in Calcutta showed signs of marked improvement. There was a sharp decrease in the number of incidents.

The situation in Patna was still tense.

2nd. Four members of the Interim Government, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, and Mr. Abdur Rab Nistar arrived in Calcutta.

H. E. the Viceroy returned to Calcutta from his East Bengal tour.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Chief Minister, Bengal, in a press interview, said that there is no possibility of a Congress League Coalition Government being formed in the province.

Patna was quiet. Minor disturbances were reported from other neighbouring towns.

Communal disturbances broke out in Dacca.

3rd. Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, in a joint statement at Calcutta, appealed for cessation of violence and for a return to the methods of peace.

Sardar Baldev Singh, the Defence Member arrived in Calcutta.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, along with his three colleagues of the Interim Government left for Patna en route to Delhi.

Wide-scale rioting, involving loot, arson, murder continued in Bhagalpur (Behar).

4th. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Food Member, gave a picture of the food situation in the country in the Central Legislative Assembly.

The demand that Federal legislation should be undertaken for the development of the textile industry on nationally-planned lines for the whole of India was urged by Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar in a resolution for discussion in the ensuing session of the Council of State.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Commons that the total number of persons killed and injured in communal riots between July 1 and October 30, was estimated at 5,018 killed and 13,320 injured respectively, exclusive of casualties in the recent disturbances in Eastern Bengal.

The riot situation in Behar was somewhat easier although minor incidents occurred. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar visited some of the affected parts.

5th. Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, stated in the House of Lords, that nothing which passed in the correspondence between the Viceroy and the Indian party leaders involved any departure from the previous intention of the British Government as to the constitutional position of the Interim Government.

The situation in Behar was comparatively quiet. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kripalani arrived in Patna. They announced Mahatma Gandhi's proposal to undertake a fast unto death if the communal riots did not stop in Behar within the next 24 hours.

A call to the nation to prepare for the impending struggle "which the country will have to launch in the near future to liquidate foreign imperialism" was made by Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the Socialist leader at Lucknow.

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, an eminent lawyer died at Madras.

"India will be able to participate in foreign air services both to the West up to the United Kingdom and to the East up to China," said Mr. J. R. D. Tata, in a Press interview at Karachi.

6th. The Central Legislative Assembly concluded the debate on the food situation.

The establishment of an Industrial Finance Corporation in India was proposed in a Bill introduced in the Central Assembly by the Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. The object was to provide credit for medium and long-term capital requirements of industry, which were outside the normal activities of commercial banks.

His Majesty the King in his speech on the prorogation of Parliament referred to "unparalleled importance of the changes taking place in India and prayed that India would prosper under the guidance of the Interim Government.

Mahatma Gandhi arrived at Chandpur in connection with his six-day tour of East Bengal.

Disturbances flared up in Patna District. Hundred persons were killed and many others injured as a result of police and military firing.

The Council of State began its autumn session.

7th. The Central Assembly passed without a division Mr. G. V. Desmukh's Bill to permit marriages between persons of same *Gotra* or *Pravara* or different subdivisions of the same caste.

The Council of State adopted without a division a resolution moved by Sir N. Gopalswami Iyengar, asking the Government of India to undertake central legislation for the development of the cotton mill industry on automatically-planned lines.

The Viceroy, accompanied by Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, arrived at Patna and visited some of the affected parts of the city. Later he had discussions with Pandit Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

The situation in Behar was quiet.

The British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Ernest Bevin, expressed confidence at New York that "India will soon be completely independent and self-governing."

8th. The immediate nationalization of civil aviation in India was urged in a non-official resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly by Sardar Mangal Singh.

H. E. the Viceroy, Lord Wavell accompanied by the Governor of Behar and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar made an aerial tour of the riot-affected areas of Behar.

9th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru returned to Delhi from Patna.

Mahatma Gandhi began his tour of the affected areas in the interior of Noakhali.

Mr. Anugraha Narain Singh, Finance Minister of Behar, said at Patna, "what happened in Behar was a continuation of the Calcutta killing and none cannot be considered separately from the other."

10th. Decentralisation of industries and power as the only solution for the economic and political crisis of the country was urged by Mr. Kundanmal Firodia, speaker of the Bombay Legislative Assembly at Bangalore.

Addressing a meeting at Simla, Mr. C. E. Gibbon, Punjab Anglo-Indian leader said that the education of the Anglo-Indian youths should be on purely nationalist lines.

11th. The Central Legislative Assembly passed a Bill moved by the Finance Member to amend the Reserve Bank of India Act.

The Madras Provincial Textile Protection Conference met under the presidency of Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliar.

An official Bill to secure the maintenance of public order was introduced by the Premier, Pt. Ravi Shankar Sukla in the C. P. Legislative Assembly, which resumed the unfinished session from September, to dispose official Bills.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a statement on the Bihar riots advised the Muslim League and the Muslims in particular to be calm and peaceful and not to take to the course of retaliation as, he said, vengeance was alien to Islamic tenets.

12th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru announced in the Central Assembly that the Soviet Foreign Minister, M. Molotov, had indicated the Soviet Government's willingness to exchange diplomatic relations with India.

The Council of State adopted the Finance Secretary, Sir Cyril Jones' motion approving India's membership of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and development.

Mr. J. Bowstead, Chief Secretary to the Government of Behar, said that the official estimate of casualties from riots in the province was on the border land of 5,000 which included police and military firing.

His Majesty the King, addressing the Parliament, said, "My Government will forward by every means at their disposal the policy with regard to the governnance of India laid down in the statements made by them and by the Mission of my Ministers which recently visited India."

Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai was appointed interim Charge d' Affairs of the new Indian Embassy in Washington, pending the appointment of a full Ambassador.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, the Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali

Khan moved reference to a Select Committee of the Bill to regulate certain payments, dealings in foreign exchange and securities and the import and export of currency and bullion.

The death occurred of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at Benares at the age of 85.

13th. The Central Legislative Assembly agreed to refer to a Select Committee the Bill to provide for the continuance of certain emergency powers in relation to land and other property requisitioned by the Army during the war.

Eight persons were killed and 24 injured as a result of police firing on a riotous mob near Delhi.

A resolution recommending the Madras Government's textile policy was adopted at a meeting of the Provincial Cloth Advisory Committee held at Madras.

Tributes from all over India were paid to the memory of the Late Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

General Smuts gave South Africa's answer to the Indian delegation's charges of racial discrimination in S. Africa and South-West Africa at the U. N. O. Assembly at New York.

Maulana Md. Akram Khan, President, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, in a statement at Madhupur (Behar) stated that "for the tragedy of Behar the first responsibility lies on the Muslim League Government of Bengal, which is practically a personal show of Mr. Suhrawardy."

14th. A bilateral air transport agreement between the U. S. A. and India was signed in New Delhi by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru on behalf of the Government of India and by Mr. George Merrel, Charge d' Affaires of the American Embassy and Mr. George A. Brownell, Personal Representative of the U. S., on behalf of the Government of the United States.

The Calcutta "Disturbances" Commission of Enquiry, which resumed its session decided to hold its proceedings *in camera* for the time being, having regard to the situation in the country.

A proposal to exchange delegations from the Tariff Boards of India and Australia was made by the leader of the Australian Industrial Delegation, Mr. B. Mecham at Bombay.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed without a division the Finance Member, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's Bill to restrict the opening and removal of branches by banking companies.

Mr, M. A. Jinnah, in a statement, explained the role of Muslim League members in the Interim Government and reiterated on the fact that the only solution of the Indian problem was Pakistan, which until "absolutely" achieved there was no possibility of an end to India's civil strife.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru celebrated his 57th. birthday. Tributes from far and near were paid to the services of Pt. Nehru in the cause of the Motherland.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee appointed to draw up a Press Code governing news of communal disturbances appealed to the Press of India to accept the recommendations saying that they were actuated "by a desire to restore normal conditions as soon as possible."

Inaugurating the All-India Film Conference at Bombay, the Premier, Mr. B. G. Kher appealed to film producers to interest themselves in the production of pictures of instructional values conveying nationalistic ideas.

15th. The Council of State passed the Bill to provide for controls in respect of certain essential commodities, such as food-stuffs, cotton, and woolen textiles, iron and steel, mica, etc.

The C, P. Legislative Assembly passed into law the Central Provinces and Berar Maintenance of Public Order on a motion of Pandit Ravi Shankar Sukla, the Premier.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Dr. G. V. Deshmukh moved reference to a Select Committee of his Bill to amend the Special Marriage Act so as to enable a marriage performed according to Hindu religious rites to be later registered under this Act.

Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani, on her return to Calcutta from Noakhali, where she had been on relief work, said, "Molestation of women, intimidation and encirclement were still continuing in the affected areas of Noakhali district."

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the Scheduled Castes' Leader, returned to India from England.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation, dwelt on the rights of women in a debate in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee of the U. N. O. at New York.

16th. The decision of the Bihar Government to issue an order under the Bihar Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance 1946, for pre-censorship of news or views concerning the communal situation in the Province was announced by the Information Minister, Mr. Badrinath Verma.

H. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad issued an appeal to the people of India urging them to stop the fratricidal strife in the country.

A solution for the present communal situation in the country was suggested in a five-point programme by Mr. Achyut Patwardhan, General-Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party, at Lahore.

Sardar Mangal Singh's resolution recommending nationalisation of air services in India was withdrawn in the Central Legislative Assembly after Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar had accepted as salutary the principle that air services, like certain other enterprises, should not be left entirely under private control and the profits should go to the public exchequer and be utilised for the benefit of the community as a whole.

Addressing a gathering of Afridi leaders at Landikotal (Peshawar), H. E. the Viceroy assured them complete freedom and pointed out that it was not the intention of the British Government to transfer power to any one political party in India.

A joint appeal by the Madras Premier, Mr. Prakasam and the leader of the Muslim League Party, Mr. Mahomed Ismail, was issued to the people of the province to co-operate with one another and with the Government and help in the restoration and preservation of peace."

17th. Khwaja Nazimuddin was elected Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Party in the Central Assembly in place of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan.

The Working Committee of the Hindusthan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh met at the residence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Deploring the communal disturbances in Bengal and Bihar, the Working Committee of the Tamil Nad Congress, under the presidentship of Mr. K. Kamaraj Nadar, viewed that these unfortunate happenings were the outcome of the "direct action" programme of the Muslim League.

Mr. C. H. Bhabha, Member for Works, Mines and Power in the Interim Government laid the foundation stone of the Fuel Research Institute, the second in the chain of India's five national laboratories at Digwadih near Dhanbad.

The Committee of Action of the A. I. Muslim League, in a statement, strongly condemned the organised and merciless destruction of the life and property of Mussalmans in Bihar and demanded an immediate independent enquiry into the happenings including the conduct of the Ministry and the officials by a commission of the highest judicial authority.

The Working Committee of the Mysore State Congress discussed ways and means of achieving Responsible Government in the State and formed a sub-committee to draw up plans for direct action.

18th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member, introduced a Bill for the more effective prevention of bribery and corruption.

Mr. Terence Shore, the first British High Commissioner Designate to India arrived at Karachi from England.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, told the House of Commons in reply to a question that 5,946 people were killed and 14,550 wounded in British India since June 29—nearly all in communal disturbances. They exclude the casualties in Bihar this month and those in Noakhali and Tipperah last month.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-Secretary of State for India, announced in the House of Commons that the Secretary of State, Lord Pethic Lawrence is not prepared to give assurance, asked by the Labour Member, Mr. Thomas Reid, that the Government of India would not undertake bombing from the air against those areas where communal disorders occur.

Representatives of Indian States met in New Delhi and made a review of the problems confronting the States in relation to the future Indian constitution to be determined by the Constituent Assembly.

A grant of Rs. 17,83,000 for the expenses of the Constituent Assembly was made by the Central Assembly without opposition.

The autumn session of the Central Legislative Assembly was adjourned *sine die.*

19th. The Congress Working Committee met at the residence of Mr. Asaf Ali and discussed resolutions to be placed before the next A. I. C. C. session at Meerut.

The claim that, as a result of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru's recent visit to the tribal areas of the N. W. F. P., better relations had been established between the tribal people and the Congress was made by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in a press interview

The Constitutional Advisory Committee of the Chamber of Princes concluded its discussions on the States with regard to the future constitution of India.

The Viceroy on his return from the frontier tribal areas, met Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah and discussed matters relating to the Constituent Assembly and the Bihar situation.

The former Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery, told the members of the Constitutional Club at London that he remained an optimist with regard to the future of the relations between Britain and India.

The Council of State passed Dr. G V. Deshmukh's Bill to remove certain disabilities and doubts under Hindu Law in respect of marriages between Hindus.

The Madras Government's textile policy with regard to the nationalisation of key industries in the province was explained by the Labour Minister, Mr. V. V. Giri at Madras.

20th. Reviewing the communal situation in the country in the Council of State, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar Leader of the House and Dr. Rajendra Prasad condemned the outrages in Bengal and Bihar and asked for the co-operation of the Legislature and the public in restoring peace.

It was officially announced in New Delhi that the Indian Constituent Assembly would meet on December 9.

The text of the correspondence between Mr. M. A. Jinnah and the Viceroy was released to the press. In his letter to the Viceroy, Mr. Jinnah had asked for the postponement of the Constituent Assembly *sine die.*

The Congress Working Committee resumed its session and drafted a number of resolutions.

The committee of Ministers of the Chamber of Princes, at its meeting at New Delhi, considered the recommendations of the Constitutional Advisory Committee on the powers and functions of the Negotiating Committee and its future programme of work.

Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy retired as President of the Council of State.

In a special message to the people of his province, the U. P., Pandit Jawharlal Nerhu appealed for immediate cessation of mutual bickerings and strife "which benefit nobody except those who wish to keep India in perpetual bondage."

21st. Pandit Nehru in an outspoken declaration in the Congress Subjects Committee at Meerut, stated that the atmosphere in the new Central Government after the League's entry has become so strained that Congress Members had twice threatened to resign. "Our patience is fast reaching the limit," he added "If these things continue," he went on, 'a struggle on a large scale in inevitable." He also charged the Viceroy with failure to carry on Government in the spirit in which he had started.

Mr. M. A Jinnah, in a statement, declared that no representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly and the Bombay resolution of the Muslim League Council of June stands. He further accused the Viceroy and H. M. G. of "playing into the hands of the Congress" and maintained that "by forcing this meeting............a situation has been created which will lead to serious consequences."

The Congress Working Committee passed three resolutions condemning communal strife in the country, regretting the repressive and reactionary activities of some of the Indian States and disapproving the policy of the Kashmir State in denying the people their normal civil liberties.

Proper establishment of the metallurgical industries on an adequate scale with the full exploitation of the mineral wealth of the country was urged by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Minister for Education, while laying the foundation stone of the National Metallurgical Laboratory at Jamshedpur.

Addressing the Convocation of the Dacca University, Sir Frederick Burrows, Governor of Bengal, described as a "contemptible lie" the allegation made in some quarters that British interest were fomenting the present communal troubles in various parts of India in order to perpetuate what was described as their imperialistic stronghold on the country. He also warned the youth against the disorders of communalism.

The Bengal Cabinet was expanded by the appointment of four Ministers— Mr. Tarak Nath Mukherjee (Irrigation and waterways), Mr. Nagendra Narayan Roy (Judicial and Legislative), Mr. Fazlur Rahman (Land Revenue & Jailes) and Mr. Dwaraka Nath Barori (Works & Buildings) who took the oath of office at Dacca.

22nd Pandit Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government and Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member issued a joint appeal to the people of India to make the armed forces their own and to encourage the best young men to apply for commission.

Dr Khan Saheb , the Frontier Premier, expressed regret at the decision of the Muslim League to boycott the Constituent Assembly.

In the Congress Subjects Committee, Pandit Nehru moved a lengthy resolution to be placed before the open session, giving a retrospect of the events in India and the world snd calling upon the people to put an end to internecine conflict and to face internal aud external danger as a united people in which they have fought in the past for India's independence. The Committee concluded its session after passing several resolutions.

23rd. The 54th plenary session of the Indian National Congress was held at Pyarelal Nagar, Meerut under the presidentship of Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President. The session unanimously passed Pandit Nehru's resolution

The correspondence between Lord Wavell and Pandit Nehru clarifying the terms of the Muslim League's participation in the Interim Government was released to the press by Pandit Nehru.

"What is being done to-day is with the object of getting the Congress out of the Interim Government. We shall not allow ourselves to be caught in the net," declared Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the plenary session of the Congress, moving a resolution ratifying the decisions of the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. leading to the formation of the Interim Government. The resolution was passed.

The *London Times*, in an editorial, emphasised that the responsibility for maintaining law and order in India rests on the Provincial Governments and supported the Viceroy's reluctance to override their authority.

Syed Ali Zaheer, former Member of the Interim Government, in a statement, appealed to the Muslim League to revise its policy over the question of joining the Constitutent Assembly, as the total boycott of the Consembly would endanger a spirit of frustration among Muslim masses and embitter further relations between the two communities.

Future relation of the Indian States' people with the Congress and the attitude of the States' people in regard to the election to the Constituent Assembly from the States formed the subject-matter of an address by Pandit Nehru, ex-President of the A. I. States' People's Conference, to a gathering of States' people's workers at Meerut.

24th. The plenary session of the Indian National Congress concluded its session after passing five resolutions, including those on the Congress Manifesto, Indian States, communal strife in the country and the revision of the Congress Constitution.

Paying his tributes to the late Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the open session of the Congress, Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, said, "To go away from the prison house that India is and to organise an independence movement outside India is the most patriotic service that a man can do provided he believes in armed resistance."

Addressing the delegates from the Indian States at Meerut, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru assured the States' people full legitimate Congress support in their struggle for freedom.

The Conservative paper, *Sunday Times*, in a despatch from London, stated, "The Congress and the Muslim League have manoeuvred each other into a deadlock from which they can emerge only by statesmanship, which neither has shown, or by civil war, which in private conversation both regard as the only solution."

The demand that provision for a joint electorate must be made by the Constituent Assembly in drafting the future constitution of India was made by a number of delegates from Bengal led by Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal, who wainted in deputation on Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kripalani at Meerut.

25th. The suggestion that the authorities, both Central and Provincial, should take up immediately the question of exchange of population to avoid the "brutal slaughter" in various parts of the country of small minorities by overwhelming majorities, was made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, at a press conference at Karachi.

Addressing the 50th session of the Indian Railway Conference Association at New Delhi, Mr. Asaf Ali, Member for Transport, urged the need for a co-ordinated policy for transport development in India and declared that an increase in railway fares is inevitable.

A challenge to General Smuts, South African Premier, to grant the Indian community there the same statutory rights as the Depressed classes have in India, was made by Syed Raza Ali, former India Government Commissioner in S. Africa, at New Delhi.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, leader of the Indian delegation, was elected chairman of the U. N. E. S. C. O. Executive Council to be held in Paris.

26th. The British Cabinet invited the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, and five members of the Interim Government—two Congress representatives two Muslim League representatives and one Sikh to London to discuss the basis of the forthcoming meeting of the Indian Constituent Assembly.

Sir Chimanlal Setalved, the Liberal leader, in a statement at Bombay, criticised as "hopelessly impracticable" the idea of exchanging populations advocated by Mr. Jinnah.

Mr. R. K. Nehru, leader of the Indian delegation to the Preparatory Committee of the International Conference on Trade and Employment at London, declared that for the economic progress in India the primary objective is liquidation of poverty and raising the standards of living of the masses for which increase of production and balance between industry and agriculture should be maintained.

Mr. C. H. Bhabba, Member for Works, Mines and Power, inaugurating the 17th annual meeting of the Central Board of Irrigation at New Delhi, stressed the need for a well-planned and co-ordinated irrigation policy in India.

27th. The British Government's invitation to the Viceroy and Indian leaders to come to Britain for consultation on the Indian political situation was announced in both the Houses of Parliament. Lord Pethic Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Lords, 'The purpose of the proposed discussion is to endeavour to reach a common understanding between the two major parties on which the work of the Constituent Assembly can proceed with the co-operation of all parties."

Sir John Colville, Governor of Bombay, returned to New Delhi from the United kingdom.

Opening an exhibition of irrigation, engineering and research organised by the Central Board of Irrigation, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru urged the need for public co-operation in working out the vast irrigation schemes in the country.

Opposition to Mr. Jinnah's proposal for the exchange of minorities population from the various provinces, was voiced by Sardar Swaran Singh, Leader of the Panthic Party in the Punjab Assembly, at Lahore. He said that the Sikhs in the Punjab would not tolerate any move to this end.

Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel communicated to the Viceroy the Congress decision not to accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to London for fresh political discussions,

In reply to a question in the House of Lords, Lord Pethic-Lawrence stated that according to latest information available 6,700 deaths had occurred in India owing to communal rioting since the Interim Government took office on September 2.

28th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah announced the formal acceptance of the Muslim League Party of His Majesty's Government's invitation to vist the U. K. for discussion.

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, announced the names of members of the new Working Committee as follows—Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Sj. Shankar Rao Deo, Mrs. Kamala Devi, Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Sj. Jaiprakash Narain, Sardar Pratap Singh, and Acharya Jugal Kishore (U. P.)

The suggestion that "the British be now given six months' ultimatum to leave India finally" was made by Sj. Jaiprakash Narain, the Socialist leader at Lahore. He said, "The 1942 Revolution and the struggle waged by the Azad Hind Fouz have so much weakened the British that they require one more push to be bundled out of India."

Addressing the ninth session of the Transport Advisory Council at New Delhi, Mr. Asaf Ali, Member for Transport spoke of a co-ordinated scheme of all forms of transport and urged the formation of tripartite companies on the lines of the White Paper so far as passenger transport was concerned.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member, Government of India, issued a circular to all Departments of the Government asking them to appoint non-Indians only in "exceptional cases and also for the minimum period necessary."

Speaking on the British Cabinet's invitation to Indian leaders, Mr. Frank Anthony, leader of the Anglo-Indian community in India, said at London, "This invitation strikes me, on the face of it, as an attempt to rehash the work done by the Cabinet Mission, the effect of which would be to move matters backward and not forward."

29th. In response to a personal appeal from Mr. Attlee and on assurance that no modification would be made in the British proposals, Pandit Nehru decided to go to London for talks.

The need of imparting military training to men and women in order to make them disciplined non-violent soldiers to combat the evil of communalism was stressed by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose at Mymensingh.

The *London Times* stressed the fact that in inviting the Hindu and Muslim Leaders to accompany the Viceroy, Lord Wavell. to London, the British Government had no desire to delay the meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

The Congress decision to join the London talks was welcomed at a preliminary conference between the Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee and the three Cabinet Ministers.

Problems connected with the future trade relations between India and the United Kingdom were discussed by W. Godfry, His Majesty's Trade Commissioner in India, with representatives of the S. I. Chamber of Commerce.

Presiding over the conference of States' Ministers on Labour, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member, asked that States should take immediate steps to meet criticism against the absence of provisions whereby the obligations of international labour convention might be assumed by Indian States.

30th. Addressing the Convocation of the Nagpur University, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member,said, "The biggest problem facing the country in how to solve the communal problem. The Muslim League is bent on a division of India even at the cost of bloodshed, others are opposed to the division under any circumstances and will not be intimidated by the League's tactics."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member, described Mr. Jinnah's proposal for the exchange of population as an "absurd" one which "can never materialize."

The text of the correspondence between the British Premier, Mr. Attlee, the Viceroy and Pandit Nehru was released to the Press.

Dr. N. B. Khare, in a press statement at Nagpur, said, "It is high time now that Mr. Jinnah is definitely and emphatically told that there never will be any Pakistan under any circumstances."

December 1946

The Viceroy and the five Indian leaders left Karachi for London.

Sir John Colville was sworn in as acting Governor-General of India.

Communal disturbances flared up in Calcutta.

The London talks between H. M. G. and the Viceroy and the five Indian leaders commenced.

The Standing Committee of the A. I. Newspaper Editors' Conference met at Bombay.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel reiterated his firm conviction "that the London talks could not solve the Indian problem."

The Bengal Government declared a state of emergency in Calcutta.

The London talks ended in a breakdown.

Mr. Asaf Ali was appointed India's Ambassador to Washington.

Pt. Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh returned to Delhi from London.

The Indian Constituent Assembly opened its session in New Delhi.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad was unanimously elected as the permanent President of the Constituent Assembly.

The recent negotiation between H. M. G. and the Indian leaders in London was reviewed in both the Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Churchill speaking at the House of Commons charged the Labour Government as being fully responsible for the riots in India.

The Governor of Madras prorogued the Madras Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Jinnah declared at London : "The sooner the British declared its intention of giving effect to Pakistan, the greater the chance of avöiding a terrific disaster."

Mr. Jinnah indicated that the condition of the Muslim League entering the Constituent Assembly was the acceptance by the Congress of H. M. G.'s interpretation of the Grouping clauses.

Mrs. V. L. Pandit, Leader of the Indian delegation to the U. N. O. returned to India from Washington.

Pt. Nehru addressed the annual meeting of the Associated Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta.

Discussion on Pt. Nehru's resolution in the Constituent Assembly was postponed.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan returned to India.

The Constituent Assembly was adjourned till January 20.

The Viceroy returned to India.

The Standing Committee of the All-India States' People's Conference met at New Delhi, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya presiding.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was appointed member of the Interim Government in place of Mr. Asaf Ali.

Pt. Nehru, Acharya Kripalani and Sj. Shankar Rao Deo met Mahatma Gandhi at Srirampur (Noakhali) and discussed current affairs.

The 27th annual session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha met at Gorakhpur. Mr. L. B Bhopatkar presided.

The 19th session of the All-India Women's Conference under the presidency of Lady Ramo Rao met at Akola.

The 10th. session of the A. I. Students' Congress opened at New Delhi.

Cessation of conferment of titles on Indians in British India was announced in New Delhi.

1st. The Viceroy Lord Wavell accompanied by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the Muslim League President, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Finance Member and Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member left Karachi by air for London.

Sir John Colville was sworn in as acting Governor-General of India at New Delhi.

H. E. Sir John Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, addressing the members of the Punjab Civil Service at Lahore, dwelt on the role of civilians in New India and advised them to be impartial in politics and say nothing which might be embarrassing to the Government in power.

It was officially announced in New Delhi that Sardar Patel would act as Vice-President of the Interim Government during the absence of Pandit Nehru from India.

A broad outline of the proposed expansion of air mail facilities, the telephone system and tele-communications in India was given by Mr. Krishna Prasad, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in an interview at Karachi.

2nd. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee was elected President-elect of the 27th session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha session to be held at Gorakhpur on December 27, 28, and 29.

Mahatma Gandhi said at Srirampur (East Bengal), "The question of exchange of population is unthinkable and impracticable. In every province every one is an Indian, be he a Hindu, a Muslim or of any other community. It would not be otherwise even if Pakistan came in full.

Addressing the Natural Science Sub-Committee, Mr. H. J. Bhabba, the Indian delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation at Paris, forecasted that malnutrition in India may disappear within ten years.

The death occurred at Lahore of Sir Jogendra Singh, former Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Mr. Arthur Henderson, Under-Secretary of State for India replied a number of questions in the House of Commons relating to the food position in India and the efforts made to increase shipments from abroad.

Resolutions demanding social and health insurance schemes and expressing concern at the communal riots in the country and condemning the firings on workers of the S. I. Railway and elsewhere were passed by the General Council of the A. I. T. U. C. which concluded its session at New Delhi.

Communal disturbances flared up in Dacca. 10 persons were killed and 19 others injured during the day. A 48 hour curfew was imposed on the affected areas.

3rd. Lord Wavell accompanied by Pandit Nehru, Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Baldev Singh arrived in London. Later he discussed with the Premier, Mr. Attle and the three Cabinet Ministers, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Mr. A. V. Alexander and Sir Stafford Cripps the political deadlock in India. Pandit Nehru also had a conference with the British Premier.

The acting U. S. Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, formally urged the Indian leaders to show a "magnanimous spirit" and grasp the opportunity of establishing a stable and peaceful Government offered by the London Conference.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru declared at London that India must resolve that, whatever the values of the problems they had to face, their methods and approach should be peaceful and co-operative, even though they might differ from each other.

An appeal to all workers in India to organise themselves in a disciplined way and prepare themselves for the supreme task of governing the country was made by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, acting Vice-President of the Interim Government addressing the workers of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh at Bombay.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad celebrated his 63rd. birthday.

The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference met at Bombay under the presidentship of Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh.

Mob outrages continued in Dacca.

4th. Mr. Jinnah in an interview at London said, "Our cause is a righteous one. We want our freedom and also freedom for Hindus as well as all minorities in India. There we cannot fail in achieving our cherished goal of Pakistan "

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, speaking at a reception at Bombay, said, "whatever efforts at an understanding or settlement are made or whatever interpretations or assurances are given to the Muslim League representatives in England during the present talks, a real understanding between the Congress and the League can be reached only in India." He added that the Congress responded to the London invitation purely on grounds of courtesy.

The formation of an All-Bengal Volunteer Corps as the remedy for the present-day troubles in Bengal was suggested by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose at Calcutta.

5th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, speaking at a reception in London, declared that although it might appear odd for him even to refer to aggression when India herself was not a free country, India was "powerful and dynamic enough to go in for aggression."

The attitude to be adopted by the Sikh members of the Constituent Assembly in its preliminary session was defined in a mandate approved by the Working Committee of the Panthic Board.

The Bihar Provincial Muslim League, in a statement on the recent communal riots in Bihar, demanded the setting up of an impartial and independent Commission of Enquiry to go into the unprecedented massacre in Behar and also into the conduct of the Ministry during that period.

Sardar Patel reiterated his firm conviction in Bombay that the London talks could not solve the Indian problem.

Seven persons were killed and 80 injured in fresh outbursts of trouble in Calcutta during the last day of the "Mohurrum" procession.

6th. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, leader of the Indian delegation to the U. N. E. S. C. O. at Paris returned to India.

The Bengal Government by a notification in the Calcutta Gazette declared a state of emergency in the "Presidency area" of Calcutta.

The London talks between His Majesty's Government and the five Indian leaders, which concluded, failed to achieve immediate results.—A statement was issued by His Majesty's Government.

The House of Commons approved the India (Governors' Allowances and Privileges) Order, whose object was to increase certain allowances to the Governor of Sind.

The appointment of Mr. Asaf Ali. Member for War Transport, as India's first Ambassador to Washington, was officially announced in New Delhi.

A five-years programme of labour legislation and administration which aimed at bringing about an improvement in the working conditions, efficiency and standard of living of workers was discussed at the Conference of Employers' and workers' Delegates at New Delhi, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Labour Member presiding.

The Premier Mr. G. H. Hidayatullah and Haji Moula Baksh was declared elected to the Sind Legislative Assembly from the Landholders' Constituency.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, addressing Indian press correspondents on the eve of his departure from London, said, "The Constituent Assembly will be a self-directing and self-determining body which will not tolerate outside interference."

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan declared at Lahore, "The question whether the Frontier Province should or should not join any Group (of the Cabinet Plan) should be entirely left to the people of the Province."

The suggestion that grouping of provinces provided in the British Cabinet Delegation's May 19 State Paper, should be dropped was made by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose at Calcutta.

7th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh left London for India.

A resolution urging adequate representation of the Indian Christians in the Minority Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly was passed by the joint Committee of the All-India Conference of Indian Christians which met at Delhi.

An informal meeting of the Congress members of the Constituent Assembly was held at New Delhi.

Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, Premier of Assam in a statement described the British Government's interpretation of their statement of May 16 as unreasonable and contrary to the principles of democratic Government which would mean forcing provinces which attained some status under the 1935 Act to submit to the dictates of larger provinces.

8th. In his presidential address at the Convention on linguistic and cultural provinces in India held at New Delhi, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya declared, "The issue of linguistic provinces must be taken up as the first and foremost problem to be solved by the Constituent Assembly. The forming of a constitution for a country would be meaningless if it was not open to the framers to determine the provinces of the country."

Pandit Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh returned to Delhi.

The Congress Working Committee met for three hours and considered the preliminary agenda for the Constituent Assembly.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, commenting on H. M. G.'s December 6 statement said at New Delhi, "I regard the statement as embodying the essence, if not the form, of Pakistan."

9th. The Indian Constituent Assembly opened its session in New Delhi with Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha as the temporary Chairman. Some 205 representatives of the 286 elected member from India were present. All the 74 Muslim League delegates were absent.

In his inaugural address as the first President of the Indian Constituent Assembly, Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha dwelt with the different aspects of the Constituent Assembly and referred to the United States constitution as a fitting model for Indian constitution makers. The U S. constitution, Dr. Sinha said, should be studied by members of the Assembly because it was based on "a series of agreements as well as a series of compromises." He emphasised the need of reasonable agreements and judicious compromises" in framing a constitition for a country like India. In his concluding speech, the president appealed to the Assembly to work with a "broad and catholic vision."

The States' Advisory Committee, at its meeting in New Delhi under the chairmanship of the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, reviewed the constitutional position in the country *vis-a-vis* the States and discussed the broad outlines of the policy to be followed by the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes.

Speaking on the role of India in the U. N. O. Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, leader of the Indian delegation to the United Nations, in a press interview at Washington, said, "India has no intention to become the satellite of any power, no matter how powerful. We desire the friendship of all nations of the world."

Mr. Arthur Henderson. Under Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Commons that it was the responsibility of the provincial Governments to maintain law and order in India.

Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan, Health Member, in a press interview at Lahore, stressed the urgent need for a sympathetic appreciation of the viewpoint of the Muslim League. He maintained that the practicable and permanent solution of the Indian problem was an outright division of the country into Pakistan and Hindustan.

The general election to the Sind Legislative Assembly was held throughout the province.

At a meeting of the Congress Party members of the Constituent Assembly at New Delhi it was unanimously decided to nominate Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the Permanent Chairman of the Assembly.

10th. Four resolutions, settling the procedure for the election of a permanent chairman, deciding the method of appointing a committee of Rules and Procedure, adopting for an interim period the rules and standing order of the Central Legislative Assembly and confirming the existing organisation of the Office of Constituent Assembly, were passed in the second day's sitting of the Indian Constituent Assembly.

Sir Shaffat Ahmed Khan gave up his title of knighthood which had been conferred on him in 1935.

The Congress Working Committee at its meeting discussed the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly.

11th. The Constituent Assembly unanimously elected Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Food and Agricultural Member, Interim Government, as its permanent President, there being no other contestants.

In his inaugural address in the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Rajendra Prasad stressed the self-governing and self-determining power of the Assembly. "I am aware," he said, "that this Assembly has been born with certain limitations placed on it from its birth. He may not forget, disregard or ignore these limitations in the course of our proceedings and in arriving at our decision. But I know, too, that in spite of these limitations, the Assembly is a self-governing and self-determining independent body in whose proceedings no outside authority can interfere and whose decisions no one outside can upset or alter or modify."

The recent negotiations between H. M. G. and the Indian political leaders was reviewed in both the Houses of Parliament at London. In the House of Commons a two-day debate on India was force upon by the Conservative leader, Mr. Churchill. Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, reviewing the talks in the House of Lords said that a general debate on Indian affairs at the present would be inopportune and might destroy the prospects of settlement.

Presiding over a Conference of Architects, which met at New Delhi, Mr. C. H. Bhabha, Member for Works, Mines and Power, pointed out that Indian architects must evolve a style of architecture which would be in keeping with the ancient traditions of the country and would best suit the needs of modern India.

The scope for expanding trade between India and Australia was referred to by Mr. B. Meecham, leader of the Australian delegation to India, at a joint discussion with the various commercial organisations in Calcutta.

The decision of the Government of India not to change the par value of the Rupee was announced in a press communique from New Delhi.

12th. The Constituent Assembly adjourned without transacting any business.

The hope that despite mutual suspicions and fears, the Congress and the Muslim League might eventually find themselves side by side in the Constituent Assembly and in the Sections was expressed by Sir Stafford Cripps, while opening the two-day debate on India in the House of Commons. "We are convinced now as we have never been," he said, "that it is only by such co-operation that a satisfactory new constitution for India can be hammered out."

H. E. the Governor of Madras prorogued the Madras Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

Mr. Haridas Mitra of Jessore and Dr. Pabitra Rai of Dacca were released from the Alipore Central Jail.

Mr. Winston Churchill, Leader of the Opposition, speaking in the House of Commons, charged the Labour Government's policy that by inviting the Congress to form an Interim Government it has facilitated a series of massacres unparalleled in the history of India.

13th. In the Constituent Assembly, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru moved a resolution, outlining the objective of the Assembly, namely the creation of a sovereign independent republic of India. He also expressed regret at the absence of the Muslim League Members of the Assembly and pleaded for the co-operation of all sections of opinion in the country in framing a new constitution.

Concluding the debate in India in the House of Commons, Mr. Alexander, Minister-designate of Defence, warmly repudiated Mr. Churchill's charge that the Labour Government had committed a cardinal error by inviting the Congress Party to form the Interim Government and added that he was shocked to hear Mr. Churchill say that that action had precipitated a series of massacres over wide regions.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a broadcast to the United States from London, declared "The sooner Britain declared its intention of giving effect to Pakistan, the greater the chance of avoiding a terrific disaster."

The Muslim League party secured a clear majority in the Sind Assembly elections having won 31 seats in a House of 60.

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, in statement at London, criticised Mr. Churchill's speech on India in the House of Commons as "embittered attacks which contain a mass of half-truths."

Mr. M A. Jinnah indicated at London that the condition of the Muslim League for entering the Constituent Assembly was the unequivocal acceptance by the Congress of the British Government's interpretations of the Grouping clauses in the Cabinet Mission's constitutional proposal for India.

U. Saw, former Premier of Burma, said at Calcutta, "I am confident that under the Vice-Presidentship of Pt. Jawharlal Nehru, India will get her Independence very soon. An independent India as a United Nation will be a sourse of strength to Asia, strategically, politically and economically."

The Congress Working Committee met and considered the statment of the British Government on the Constituent Assembly and the recent Parliamentary debate on India.

15th. Lady Cripps, in a press interview at New Delhi, said, "Whatever may be the temporary difficulties, India and Britain must not lose faith in each other."

On her arrival at Karachi, Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Leader of the Indian Delegation to the United Nations, declared, "The British Government does not really have power to stem India's constitutional advance any longer, in spite of the sentiments expressed by the British regarding the disunity among the Indian communities and the possibilities of a civil war in India."

The degree of Doctorate in Letters was conferred on Pt. Jawharlal Nehru at the Convocation of the Benares University.

16th. The view that the Pathans and Punjabis are two major nations and the very thought of grouping of N. W. F. P. with the Punjab was revolting to the Pathan mind was expressed by Nawabzada Alla Nawaz Khan, speaker of the N. W. F. P. Legislative Assembly.

Addressing the annual general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Calcutta, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru referred to Free India's relationship with other countries. He said, "India's relationship with England is very peculiar. But there are many visible and invisible contacts made during the last 150 years" and this relationship will continue, "unless the break comes in such a way as to poison the future." Pt. Nehru further declared that various safeguards enjoyed by British commercial interests and industries in India which were 'really discriminations' have got to go.

The Constituent Assembly continued discussion of the resolution moved by Pandit Nehru defining the objectives of the future Indian constitution. Opening the session Dr. M. R. Jayakar moved an amendment to the resolution, the object of the amendment being to postpone further consideration of the resolution in order to enable a fully attended Constituent Assembly, in which the Muslim League and representatives of Indian States would be present, to consider the details of the resolution.

Sir Evan Jenkins, the Punjab Governor, addressing a meeting at Sargodha, deprecated talks of civil war and transfer of population.

Dealing with the Government's intentions in setting up the Constituent Assembly in India, Lord Pethick Lawrence declared in the H. of Lords, "H. M. G. do not consider that this issue is one which it is desirable should be referred to the Federal Court. The Statement of December 6 makes it clear and also the interpretation which H. M. G. themselves hold. The view of the British Government is that the interpretation should be accepted by all parties."

17th. In the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, supporting Pandit Nehru's resolution and opposing Dr. Jayakar's amendment to it, declared, "Our sanction is not the British Government or Parliament, our sanction is the people of India."

Sir William Stampe Irrigation Adviser to the Government of India, addressing the East India Association at London, said that the ideal way to encourage lasting comradeship between the East and the West was for both parties to take part in fostering India's agricultural economy.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad said at Bombay : "The British Government have 'woefully bungled' on the question of grouping and a reference to the Federal Court for interpretation of the grouping clause in the Cabinet Mission's statement will be fruitless."

18th. In reply to a debate in the House of Lords, Lord Pethic Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, expressed the hope that "the transition in India, difficult as it must necessarily be, will be one carried out with goodwill, general consent and approval."

In the Constituent Assembly, Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar proposed an alternative to the question of going to Federal Court. He declared, "Going to Federal Court is absolutely useless, as it will solve none of our troubles. The wiser thing to do is to bring up a resolution in this Assembly, proposing a modification of clause 19 (5) which will provide that the method of voting should be by provinces in the sections so far as the grouping matter is concerned". Supporting Dr. Jayakar's amendment, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru. said, "We are prepared to take into account all that is reasonable, but we cannot agree in any circumstances to allow one party to decide the fate of this Assembly."

Full support to Mr. Jinnah's proposal for exchange of population as the only satisfactory solution of the present communal problem in the country was made by Mr. Ghazanafar Ali Khan. Member of the Interim Government.

In a press interview on Pandit Nehru's resolution in the Constituent Assembly, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, President of the All India Liberal Federation expressed himself in favour of the viewpoints put forward by Dr. Jayakar and Dr. Ambedkar.

A plea for toleration, understanding and for an amicable settlement of political differences among the parties in India was made by Sir C. Setalvad, the liberal leader, at Bombay.

19th. The debate on Pandit Nehru's resolution on objectives was resumed in the Constituent Assembly. Supporting the resolution and opposing Dr. Jayakar's amendment, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar said, "Neither the Muslim League nor the Indian States would have a place in the Constituent Assembly unless they subscribed to the principle of a single Indian Union in terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement. It was inconceivable that any constitution could be framed without a directing objective of which the present resolution was a formulation."

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Communications Minister said at Peshawar, "This Constituent Assembly, where one of the main constituents is absent, is nothing more than a mock assembly. Ten crores of Muslims are not going to accept any constitution which is not framed with their tacit approval and consent."

An appeal to the Muslims in Egypt and other Middle East States to cooperate with Indian Muslims in their struggle against the Hindus was made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah at Cairo, on his way back to India from London.

20th. Congress members of the Constituent Assembly discussed the question of referring the dispute over Grouping provisions to the Federal Court.

Dr. Khan Saheb, the Frontier Premier, said at New Delhi, "Nobody from outside could force the Frontier Province to join any group. The question would have to be decided by a majority vote of the Frontier people themselves."

Mahatma Gandhi's views on the Constituent Assembly and the situation created by H. M. G's Dec. 6 statement were given by Mr. Bijay Chand Bhagwat and Mr. Mohendra Mohan Chowdhury, two Assam Congressmen who met Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Assam Premier, Mr. Bardoloi.

21st. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the Muslim League President and Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Finance Member returned to India.

At a press conference at Karachi, Mr. Jinnah said, "Unless and until the Congress unequivocally accepted the interpretation of December 6 statement of H. M. G., there was no occasion for him to call a meeting of the Muslim League Council to revise its previous decisions."

In the Constituent Assembly further discussion on Pandit Nehru's resolution was postponed until the next session. The Assembly set up a Committee of six to confer with the Negotiating Committee formed by the Chamber of Princes. It also left three places vacant for the Muslim League.

The need for increased production of cloth in view of the steady deterioration in its availability in the country was the principal subject of discussion at the meeting of the Industries Committee of the Textile Control Board at New Delhi.

Opening the 22nd session of the Indian Historical Records Commission at Indore, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Education Member, urged the need for a co-ordinated and uniform State policy regarding the finding and storage of historical documents throughout India.

Giving her impressions of the U. N. O. session, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Leader of the Indian Delegation to the U. N. O. stated at New Delhi, that the two lessons she had drawn from her experience at the U. N. O. was first, India's status in international field was fairly strong and secondly, India's new foreign policy was being appreciated by all other countries.

22nd. The Constituent Assembly continued discussion in camera on the Draft Rules and Procedure Committee's report.

Reviewing the position arising from the British Government's statement of December 6 and subsequent pronouncements in Parliament, the Congress Working Committee, at its meeting, expressed the view that a reference to the Federal Court was "uncalled for, unbecoming and unsuited to the dignity of either the Congress or the Federal Court." The Committee further decided to convene an emergent meeting of the A. I. C. C. on January 5 to consider the latest developments.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Education Minister, addressing a meeting at Indore, called upon Indians to banish untouchability from the country and "open the heart-strings and purse-strings to enable Harijans all over the country to come into their own."

The value of technical education for the regeneration of a country was stressed by Sir Jnan Chandra Ghosh, Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, addressing the convocation of the National Council of Education, Bengal at Jadavpur, Calcutta.

23rd. The Constituent Assembly adjourned till January 20 after passing the report and rules of the Procedure Committee and appointing three minor committees.

The Viceroy, Lord Wavell returned to India from London.

Boycott of the forthcoming January elections to the Kashmir State Assembly was announced by Mr. Bakshi Ghulam Mohamed, Acting President of the Kashmir National Conference,

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Congress) was declared elected to the Central Legislative Assembly from the Calcutta non-Muhammadan Constituency in place of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose.

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a communication to the Bengal Premier, Mr. Suhrawardy seeking clarification of certain points and inviting the Bengal Government's co-operation with regard to relief and rehabilitation work in the Noakhali district.

The need for fostering village industries and handicrafts as the soundest basis for the industrial growth of the country was urged by Mr. T. V. Kalyanasundra Mudaliar, opening the All-India Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition at Madras.

24th. A call to the Sikhs to carry on their struggle till a satisfactory provision was made for safeguarding their interests in the future constitution of India was made by the Sikh Pratinidhi Panthic Board which met at Amritsar.

The Sind Progressive Muslim Jamait, under the presidentship of Sheikh Abdul Majid passed a resolution criticising the Muslim League's policy and according full support to the Congress in the task of solution of the present problems in the country.

The Working Committee of the Sind Provincial Muslim League considered a resolution expressing "no-confidence" in the Premier, Mr. G. A. Hidayutullah and demanding his relinquishment from office.

An appeal to the Goans to merge all differences of caste and religion "in the urge to create a republic of Hindustan which will be secular and will give protection to all religions" was made by Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, the Congress Socialist leader.

A Communique issued from New Delhi announced the appointment by the Canadian Government of Mr. John D. Kearney, as High Commissioner for Canada in India.

Mahatma Gandhi in his post-prayer speech at Srirampur (Noakhali) said, "I have come here neither to discredit the Bengal Government before the eyes of the world or to embarrass them. If the Bengal ministers feel that my presence is embarrassing to them, then I would certainly consider my position. My mission is of supreme importance and if it succeeds it would have profound influence not only in Bengal but throughout the country and the world."

25th. A complete overhaul of the Political Department for the proper administration of the tribal areas was demanded by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Frontier leader at Lahore.

Mr. Justice Chagla, Member of the Indian Delegation to the U. N. General Assembly, declared at Karachi that India's achievement in the South African dispute was a "great victory."

Presiding over the 21st. session of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Conference at Akola, Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose, President, All-India Trade Union Congress declared that the recommendation of the Pay Commission were inadequate and would not help to alleviate the distress of lower grade postal employees.

26th. The Standing Committee of the All-India States' People's Conference, which met at New Delhi under the presidentship of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, passed a resolution expressing its "whole-hearted approval of the resolution before the Constituent Assembly on the Declaration of Objectives.

A three-point programme for the development of agricultural economy in India on scientific lines was outlined by Sir Manilal B. Nanavati, presiding over the seventh conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics at Karachi.

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, commenting on Field Marshall Smuts' recent speech in Pretoria, said, "Racial imperialism is even more odious than economic imperialism. So long as either of them prevails, there can be no peace in the world."

Presiding over the 71st. International Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Mr. C. Jinarajdasa made a strong plea against extremism in politics which resulted in communal outbursts.

Mr. Deveswar Sharma, Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, said at Gauhati, "The Assam members of the Constituent Assembly would follow implicitly the mandate given by the Provincial Assembly not to sit in sections as designed in the State Paper."

27th. A Press communique issued from New Delhi announced the appointment of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as a member of the Interim Government in the vacancy created by the appointment of Mr. Asaf Ali as India's Ambassador in Washington.

Pandit Nehru, Acharya Kripalani, and Mr. Shankar Rao Deo arrived at Calcutta en route to Srirampur (Noakhali) to meet Mahatma Gandhi.

A four-point programme to propagate the "ideas and ideals for which the Hindu Mahasabha stands for and to indicate to the Hindus the bright lines of their defence against Muslim aggression was outlined by Mr. L. B Bhopatkar, presiding over the 27th annual session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha at Gorakhpur.

Inaugurating the All India Hindu Mahasabha session, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee said, "If all the members of the Constituent Assembly remain united and proceed with their task without any anxiety to appease the Muslim League or to make any surrender on the fundamental issues of Indian unity and liberty, there is no power on earth that can ultimately stand in the way of attaining the goal. But, to my mind, it seems certain that India must pass through another stage of bitter struggle before she attains her complete freedom."

Mahatma Gandhi, in his post prayer speech at Srirampur, said, "If Indians were foolish enough to quarrel amongst themselves when the British had quitted, then India would pass under control of the United Nations".

The Standing Committee of the All-India States' People's Conference passed resolutions on the general situation in the States and on Hyderabad and Kashmir. The resolution on the general situation demanded the complete overhaul of the Political Department, both in its personnel and its relation with the Government of India and the States.

28th. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Acharya Kripalani and Sj. Shankar Rao Deo, met Mahatma Gandhi at Srirampur (Noakhali) and had long discussions. The recent London talks, the proceedings of the first session of the Constituent Assembly and also the Grouping issue were the subject matters for discussion.

The possibility—if not the probability—of a breakdown of the Interim Government within the next six months, which might precipitate a revolutionary struggle against the British on the basis of a constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly, was forecast by Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the socialist leader at Delhi.

Presiding over the 19th. session of the All India Women's Conference at Akola, Lady Dhanvanti Rama Rao deplored the communal strife in the country, condemned the propaganda which had led to such conditions and appealed to the women of the country to work in co-operation with all communities in order to restore mutual confidence among them.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly said at Bareilly, "The Constitution that was being evolved by the Constituent Assembly would be so framed as to be acceptable to all groups in India."

Addressing the 10th session of the All-India Students' Congress at New Delhi, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, said, "we are moving fast towards a revolution, which is several times bigger in intensity than that of the 1942 revolution. This will not only destroy the British Government and the Viceroy but also communalism and the Princely Order and all those who have stood in the way of India's independence."

29th. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Member, addressing a gathering of labourers at Ahmedabad, declared that the only obstacle to India's freedom to-day was internal strife and it behoved everyone to rid the country of this weakness.

Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, the Assam Premier had an interview with Mahatma Gandhi at Srirampur in connection with the question of Assam's grouping into sections.

The All-India Hindu Mahasabha at the 2nd day's session passed resolutions on the future constitution of India and on the recent events in Noakhali.

Police opened fire in Allahabad following the occurrence of disturbances in the city.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing the second day's session of the A. I. Students' Congress, deplored the differences among Indian students and urged the need for an united front to solve the intricate problems facing the country.

30th. Pandit Nehru, Acharya Kripalani, and Sj. Shankar Rao Deo returned to Calcutta from Srirampur en route to Delhi.

An appeal for co-operation between the Government, the employer and the worker to raise the standard of living of the people of India was made by Mr. J. R. Walker, former Leader of the European Party in the Bengal Assembly, addressing the Rotary Club at Calcutta.

A resolution embodying the future programme of the Hindus which envisages the formation of "Hindusthan National Guards" for the purpose of self-defence was passed at the All-India Hindu Mahasabha session which concluded to-day.

The A. I. Women's Conference endorsed the Indian women's charter of rights and the memorandum on planning national welfare drafted by the Standing Committee and requested the Constituent Assembly to incorporate their fundamental points in the constitution of an Indian Republic.

Inaugurating the annual Conference of the All-India society of Agricultural Economics, Mr. M. R. Masani, M. L. A. (Central) urged the drastic reduction of land revenue and the establishment of parity of prices in order to give a fair deal to the peasant, the backbone of economic India.

31st. It was officially announced in New Delhi that in future no titles would be conferred on Indians in British India, whether military or civilian.

Pt. Nehru, Acharya Kripalani and Sj. Shankar Rao Deo returned to Delhi from Calcutta.

Addressing the A. I. Students' Congress, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru said, "The struggle for freedom is going on as intensely as ever in many shapes and forms. Our part in it is the defeat of all reactionary elements in India which are lining up with Foreign elements and trying to impede our march forward."

The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee adopted a resolution calling upon all law-abiding citizens to organise themselves for self-defence instead of depending on the Governmental machineries, which had failed to maintain law and order in the Province.

The Experts' Committee of the A. I. States' People's Conference published a report laying down ten principles which formed the basis of Responsible Government in Indian States and suggesting the grouping of the States into regional units.

India in Home Polity

The two World Wars—a struggle against Britain's monopoly

Since the outbreak of the Second World War of the 20th century, it has devolved upon us to trace the meaning and significance of world events as these from a distance affected India's evolution towards a free Statehood and as these were affected by the struggles in India striving to rid herself of alien rule and in the process rid herself of the weaknesses in her body politic. During the last few years since September, 1939, Britain tried to assert her power over India's destiny, to utilize India's resources for her own war of survival. This war may have been caused by Hitler's Germany, but developments in Europe, the emergence of the Soviet Union, for instance, the rise of the United States and of Japan set in motion conditions that would disturb the monpoly enjoyed by Britain since the middle of the 18th century. The last two world wars had been fought to rid the world of this monopoly and re-establish some sort of a balance between the competing ideologies of the world represented by certain States or a combination of these States. This is the inner meaning of the alarums and excursions that were heralded by the Boer War and that have not reached finality even after Britain has weathered the storm by helping to defeat the ambitions of Germany and Japan to have a place in the world order proportionate to their peoples' capacity. Other peoples' claim to have a share in the primacy that Britain enjoyed has appeard on the horizon—the United States of America and the Soviet Union representing these new claimants. Even after eighteen months of the end of the Second World War, we do not find that competitions that create conditions of war have ceased. And the world appears to be as far off from stability as in August, 1914 when the First World War burst out to start a process of disequilibrium in the world's affairs.

India's re-action to Britain's new role

India has been a victim of these oscillations and shifts, more unconsciously reacting to their demands ; her lack of political freedom had forced this vegetative role on her. The policy of keeping her dependent on Britain's might robbed her the power to consciously readjust her ideas and necessities to the altered circumstances of the times. As in 1914 so in 1939, India was made a participant in a war in which she felt and believed herself to be unconcerned. It was Britain's necessity that forced this subservience on her. And though Nationalist India revolted against it—the out-burst of August-November, 1942, being a demonstration of this fact,—it could not halt the exploitation by Britain of her human forces and natural resources. But when the Second World War ended, Britain found herself weaker than the United States and the Soviet Union, though her flag flew over areas larger than those under the control of these two States. And her Labour Government found itself face to face with an economic mal-adjustment that deprived her of all initiative in world affairs. This condition of things forced on her ruling classes a policy of reconciliation with the dependent part of her Empire. India and Burma became the first concern of the British Government so far as this new approach to solving inter-racial relations were concerned. The Cabinet Delegation to India that laboured for about four months to straighten out Indo-British relations returned disappointed with the non-appreciation by Indian parties of the honesty of their policy and the wisdom of the practical measures proposed to advance it. We have seen how the Indian National Congress had accepted the plan announced on May 16, 1946, and rejected that made on June 16. The All-India Muslim League accepted both the plans, and manouvred to get into the Interim Government sketched in the June 16 plan and dominate it in the absence of the representatives of the Congress. The manouvre failed because the Cabinet Delegation and the London Government did not much appreciate the prospect of leaving the greatest political organization in India unrepresented in the Government and unreconciled to the new solution of the Indian problem. How the leadership of the Muslim League felt about it was revealed in course of a Press Conference held by Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the morning of July 31, 1946.

> "There is not the slighest doubt that after we did this (accepted the plan of Federation and "Grouping" suggested in the May 16 plan) the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy went back on their word within ten days with regard to their proposal embodied in their statement of June 16, which was announced to be final. They put the most fantastic and dishonest interpretation on Paragraph 8.

Clause 8 & its interpretations

To appreciate this charge made by Mr. Jinnah against the British Government's interpretation of clause 8 of the June 16 Statement, this interpretation should be quoted. We quote both these below.

> *Clause*—8. In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a Coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16.

In course of his letter dated June 28 (1946), to Mr. Jinnah, Lord Wavell said ;

> "You will remember that at an interview which the Cabinet and I had with you on the evening of the 25th June, before the meeting of your Working Committee at which you accepted the proposal in the Statement of the 16th June, we explained to you that as the Congress had accepted the Statement of the 16th May while refusing to take part in the 'Interim Government' proposed in the Statement of the 16th June, this had produced a situation in which Paragraph 8 of the Statement of the 16th June took effect... ......"

Lord Wavell appeared to suggest that the Congress by accepting the Statement of May 16 became entitled to be invited to the Interim Government in its representative capacity as the biggest organization of the country. Mr. Jinnah appeared to have been led to believe that the Cabinet Mission were "in honour bound to go ahead with the formation of the Government as all contingencies including the rejection by the Congress were contemplated and provided for in the Statement of June 16, and Clause 8 of the Statement taken along with the context is quite clear." Sir Stafford Cripps who continued to be regarded as "the brain trust" of the Cabinet Mission gave, however, an interpretation of Clause 8 which cuts the ground from under Mr. Jinnah's contention. We quote from *Hansard* what Sir Stafford said in reply to an "interjected enquiry" by Mr. Richard Butler (Conservative) as to the meaning of this particular Clause in the Statement of June 16, on the occasion of his statement made in the House of Commons on July 18, 1946.

"If either the Congress or the Muslim League would not consent to come into the Coalition Government, then the scheme for the Coalition Government went because it would no longer be a Coalition, and we would have to find some other Interim Government of those who accepted the scheme of May 16."

Behind-the-scenes negotiations and Muslim League tactics

In another part of his speech, he described the behind-the scenes negotiations that Mr. Jinnah had been engaged in with the Cabinet Mission and Lord Wavell. The following rather long extract from it is necessary to understand the trend of the tactics of the Muslim League leader.

"It was made perfectly clear to Mr. Jinnah on more than one occasion that neither the Viceroy nor the Mission would accept his claim to a monopoly of the Muslim appointments (in the Interim Government) though the Muslim League was certainly to be regarded as the major representative of Muslim interests.

"Up to June 16 thus indicated the Muslim League only, as neither the Congress nor the Sikhs had up to that time given any decision. They decided .....to accept the Statement of May 16 while unfortunately rejecting the Interim Government proposals.

"Immediately we received the letter from the Congress we saw Mr. Jinnah and told him the position, giving him a copy of the letter and informing him that the scheme of June 16 had fallen to the ground since the Congress had turned it down..... up to that moment the Muslim League had arrived at no decision as to their attitude to the proposal of June 16.........

"Mr. Jinnah went straight from his meeting with us to his Working Committee who had passed a resolution accepting the scheme of June 16. Presumably, Mr. Jinnah told his Working Committee what had passed at the interview.. ......

"Mr. Jinnah seemed to think that accepting by the Congress of the Statement of May 16 had put him into a false position, and that we should have proceeded forthwith to the formation of an Interim Government with the Muslim League alone.

"It is easy to realize the disappointment of Mr. Jinnah that the Congress had not accepted what apparently seemed to him an acceptable arrangement (of June 16) for a Coalition Government being set up, while at the same time qualifying themselves for consultation upon the formation of some other Interim Government by agreeing to operate the plan of May 16. Mr. Jinnah was anxious to enter the Coalition Government,...........but as Paragraph 8 of that Statement made the setting up of such a Government dependent on acceptance by both the parties, it was impossible to proceed upon that basis when one party—and the major party—had stated its unwillingness to accept."

Mr. Jinnah's own version

In order to understand the genesis of the difficulties that stood in the way of the formation of the Interim Government, one should inform himself of Mr. Jinnah's version of the story This we got from his statement issued through the Press on the 29th June, 1946. From a perusal of it, we come to learn that Lord Wavell revived his "parity" proposal first suggested in July, 1945. On that occasion, the "parity" was sought to be established between the "Caste Hindus" and Muslims; on the present occasion it was "5 : 5 : 2, i. e. 5 representatives of the Muslim League, 5 of the Congress, 1 Sikh, 1 Indian Christian or Anglo-Indian." Mr. Jinnah asserted that "the Viceroy did make a clear representation to me" that he would proceed to form the Interim Government on this basis. "The Viceroy further authorized me to make that representation to my Working Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League which I did, and it was on this basis that both the Working Committee and the Council were induced to accept the Long-term plan (May 10) and the proposal for the Interim Government (June 16) together as a whole." Mr. Jinnah calls this "representation" an assurance that there will be only 12 portfolios, 5 on behalf of the League, 5 Congress, 1 Sikh, 1 Christian or Anglo-Indian". Lord Wavell denied that there had been any "assurance about 5 : 5 : 2 ratio," though he confessed that 'this was what I had in mind." It appears that on June 13 the Viceroy "suddenly" presented a new formula to Mr. Jinnah for the composition of the Interim Government, i, e. "5 : 5 : 3." This formula was unacceptable to the Congress and the League leader was informed of this failure on the 15th June. Followed the Statement of June 16, Paragraph 8 of which informed the world that Lord Wavell "is, therefore, issuing invitations to the following to serve as members of the Interim Government on the basis that the constitution-making will proceed in accordance with the Statement of May 16th : Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir N. P. Engineer, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr. C Rajagopalachari, Mr. H. K. Mahtab, Dr. John Mathai, Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, Sardar Abdur Rab Nistar, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad." It will be apparent that this list does not maintain the "parity" formula between the Congress and the League ; the number of members is increased disturbing the proportion of the Congress and the League in the whole Government. Another fact has to be taken note of in connection with Muslim representation. Though the Muslim League was not accepted as the sole representative organization of the Muslims of India, in the Interim Government no other party representative of other Indian Muslims find a place. Thus in practice the Cabinet Mission and Lord Wavell accepted the League claim that they alone have the right to speak and act on behalf of Indian Muslims. This *de facto* recognition did not evidently satisfy Mr. Jinnah, and drove him to angry outbursts. In his reply to Lord Wavell's letter of June 28, Mr. Jinnah was markedly on the offensive.

> "The explanation that you now give in your letter under reply of what took place between me and the Cabinet Delegation and yourself does not change in any way the position. The fact is that you did not communicate to me your views *officially* (*Italics ours*) before the meeting of the Working Committee. I requested you to send your views *officially* to me, and you did so by your letter of the 25th June which reached me at mid-night after the Working Committee had passed their resolution which was released to the Press according to the solemn agreement that we were to give our reply immediately after the decision of the Congress. If you wish to take the credit that some idea was given to me of the change on your part in the course of the interview where we discussed so many things, you may do so."

This summary of the Wavell-Jinnah correspondence that appeared in Mr. Jinnah's statement on June 29 to the Press ended with a grave charge against the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy. Herein Mr. Jinnah asserted that these high personages "had gone back on their word within ten days of the publication of their final proposals in not implementing the Statement of the 16th June......;" he quoted with approval what somebody else had said : "Statesmen should not eat their words." We cannot explain the causes of this bitterness on Mr. Jinnah's part. There may be something in the interpretation of Sir Stafford Cripps that Mr. Jinnah had reason to to feel "disappointment" that Lord Wavell and the Cabinet Mission refused or felt unable to toe his own line—form the Interim Government "with the Muslim League alone." This was what Mr. Jinnah had been scheming for since Lord Linlithgow gave him a "veto" on constitutional advance in India. On the present occasion, the Government appeared to have developed a certain amount of indecision with regard to the interpretation of paragraph 8 of the Statement of June 16. For we find them inviting Mr Jinnah on the evening of the 25th June at 5-30 P.M. to an interview. What followed, we will allow Mr, Jinnah to describe.

> "............I was *suddenly* (*Italics ours*) called by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy ; fantastic interpretations were suggested of the Statement of the 16th June in the course of our talk and I was asked to give my opinion ; and I emphatically differed from them. It was agreed that they will communicate in writing to me finally their views and the action they proposed to take. The Viceroy then sent me his letter dated the 25th June, which reached me.........at midnight after the resolution of the Working Committee was passed and released to the Press If, as it is now sought to make out, they had already come to their final decision as to the course they were going to adopt, why was the decision not communicated to me by the Viceroy earlier on the 25th of June instead of calling me for discussion as to the correct interpretation or true construction of Paragraph 8 in the Statement of June 16, and then informing me that the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy will communicate with me as to what they proposed to do?

Cripps report on Congress stand point

We have Mr. Jinnah here in his most querulous of mood, making it a grievance that he should have been "suddenly' asked to discuss things, that decisions should not have been "officially" sent to him at convenient hours though broad hints had been thrown at him indicating the minds of the Cabinet Mission and of Lord Wavell. He appeared to suggest that the delay in sending the reply "officially" on the 25th June was a trap to which his Working Committee succumbed, and under false hopes accepted the June 16 Statement with the hope of securing a dominant position in the Interim Government. Baulked of this objective, the Muslim League leader could only fly into rage. The leadership of the Indian National Congress were free from this opportunism of the League leader, and they had a broader principle by which to judge every suggestion of the British negotiators and of the Muslim League. This principle was indicated in the letter of June 25 addressed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Congress, to Lord Wavell.

> "The Congress, as you are aware, is a national organization including in its fold members of all religions and communities in India. For more than half a century it has laboured for the freedom of India and for equal rights for all Indians. The link that has brought all these various groups and communities together within the fold of the Congress is the passionate desire for national independence, economic advance and social equality. It is from this point of view that we have to judge every proposal. We hoped that a Provisional National Government would be formed which would give effect in practice to this independence.
>
> Appreciating some of your difficulties, we did not press for any statutory change introducing independence immediately, but we did expect a *de facto* change in the character of the Government making for independence in action. The status and powers of the Provisional Government were thus important.
>
> In our view this was going to be something entirely different from the Viceroy's Executive Council............your letter dated 30th May, 1946, gave us certain assurances about the status and powers of the Provisional Government. These did not go far enough, but we...........decided to accept the assurances and not to press this particular matter any further."

Sir Stafford Cripps in his report to the House of Commons (July 18, 1946) admitted that "the Congress always insisted upon the non-communal nature of its organisation and it has fully demonstrated this fact by its nomination of personnel to those Provincial Governments in which it had large majorities." From a wider point of view it became clear that the Congress was wise (in upholding that "the question of the Interim) Government should first be settled after which a settlement as to the Constituent Assembly should follow." The British Government thought otherwise upholding the Muslim League contention that "they could not discuss the composition of the Interim Government until the long-term question associated with the setting up of the Constitution-making machinery had been settled." The course of negotiations demonstrated that the "short-term" settlement, announced on June 16, created all the difficulties and ultimately wrecked all chances of success of the "long-term" procedure indicated in the Statement of May 16. The real order of things, suggested by the Congress, may have met with the same failure. For, since 1940, the British Government had created a vested interest for the Muslim League in endowing it with a "veto power" over all constitutional advance in India. Writing in December, 1947, on developments that took place in the middle of 1946, we have felt that an air of unreality hovered over all our attempts to interpret men and things of the earlier period. But a publicist cannot escape the responsibility of recapturing the past and seeking to bring out of it meaning and significance that would explain the present. Sir Stafford Cripps' report enables us to do this work and to bring out the differences in India that halted the Labour Government's desire to solve India's political problem. When he made the report, he and his colleagues in the Cabinet Mission liked to nurse the impression that "both the parties" in India would "go into the Assembly (Constituent) with the object of making it work," as they had "quite categorically" stated that this "was their intention". But one of the parties upset the arrangement by its decision of July 29, 1946, when by solemn resolutions they withdrew support to the Cabinet Mission's Plan, "long-term" and "short-term" both. The Cabinet Mission left for England on the 29th June, and something must have happened during the next 30 days which drove the Muslim League to declare its non-co-operation with the Plan. We do not know. But this we do know that Mr. Jinnah felt himself to have "lost face", and in his anger he switched his organization to a line of activity that proved itself to be treachery to next-door neighbours and not to the alien State in India.

Muslim League's "Direct Action" resolution

The resolutions by which the Council of the Muslim League withdrew their acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's Plan will be found elsewhere in this volume. We will not reproduce here the condemnatory resolution passed on July 29, 1946. We, however, propose to quote the operative resolution that was passed to demonstrate the resentment of the League. It has been called "Direct Action" resolution; a misnomer it proved as the Muslim League did nothing against the alien authority in the way of "direct action"; there was no agitation directed against any practice of this Government. The resolution said:

> "Whereas the League has today resolved to reject the proposals embodied in the Statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy of May 16, 1946, due to the intransigence of the Congress on the one hand and with the breach of faith with the Muslims by the British Government on the other; and

whereas Muslim India has exhausted without success all efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Indian problem by compromise and constitutional means; whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up a Caste Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British; and whereas recent events have shown that power-politics and not justice and fair play are the deciding factors in Indian affairs; whereas it has become abundantly clear that the Muslims of India would not sit content with anything less than the immediate establishment of an independent and full sovereign State of Pakistan and would resist any attempt to impose any constitution, long term or short-term, of the setting up of an Interim Government at the Centre without the approval and consent of the Muslim League, the Council of the All-India Muslim League is convinced that the time has now come for the Muslim nation to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan and assert their just rights and to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present slavery under the British and the contemplated future of Caste Hindu domination.

"This Council calls upon the Muslim nation to stand to a man behind their sole representative organization, the All-India Muslim League, and be ready for every sacrifice."

"Direct Action" in action has not stopped "bloodshed and civil war"

This resolution also authorized the Working Committee of the Muslim League "to prepare forthwith a programme of direct action to carry out the policy initiated above" and "to organize the Muslims for the coming struggle to be launched as and when necessary." In his speech closing the meeting, Mr. Jinnah declared that by this resolution recommending "direct action", the Muslim League was bidding "good-by to constitutional methods;" that they were moved by the "desire not to allow the situation to develop into bloodshed and civil war." But in face of what happened on the occasion of the celebration of the "Direct Action" Day by the enthusiasts of the Muslim League on August 16, 1946, it is not possible to accept the *bonafide* of Mr. Jinnah's declaration. Whether the leaders of the Muslim League wanted it or not, the bloodshed and bestiality that characterized this day has started a new experience in India's recent history. We had in Calcutta an outburst that disrupted neighbourly life and set the Hindu and the Muslim in two warring camps determined to exterminate one another. As we write in December, 1947, when the supreme price has been paid to this spirit of antagonism, when India's unity and integrity has been shattered by the division of the country into two States, we have often felt that there was no use in apportioning blame between the two political organizations—the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League—for this division. The decision of June 3, 1947, accepting division of India, has made this controversy about what happened in August, 1946, out of date. But the publicist who proposes to write for the future, to enable the historian to understand and explain the various stages of the development of the idea of a Divided India, has to make an attempt to recapture the spirit, the evil spirit, of 1946 so that 1947 may be understood and explained in the context of the retirement of British power from India making its exit in the wake of bloodshed and arson not caused by a fight against the British regime but by a madness of mutual hatred started by the Muslim League propaganda and continued for more than seven years. In successive sessions of the Muslim League the Hindu was presented as the scape-goat for all the evils the Indian Muslim suffered from. Mr. Fazlul Huq when Chief Minister of Bengal threatened the Hindus from the platform of the Lucknow session of the Muslim League with dire consequences if they dared interfere with the conceits and pretensions of the League. This speech has become notorious. The pace set by men like him in the leadership of the Muslim League was imitated by lesser men who spread the poison all over the country. The spirit of this propaganda found expression through poems and doggrels that carried the Muslim masses off their feet and laid the ground ready for what we saw in Calcutta on August 16, 17, & 18, 1946 and the months that followed. One such poem or doggrel is quoted below, translated from the Bengalee-language daily, the *Azad* of Calcutta. It appeared on March 10, 1941. It had been recited by the Chairman of the Reception Committee at the Kalihati and Ghatail Muslim League Conference in the district of Mymensingh held earlier in that month. Two Ministers of the Fazlul Huq Ministry were present on the occasion. Our readers will realize that the pattern of conduct extolled in this doggrel has been in incubation for more than six years. 1946 and 1947 exhibited it before all the world.

"The oppressed remain silent by seeing the hypocrisy
Of the idolatrous Hindus—Oh ! death-like eddy.
O victorious soldiers ! march forward
On our religious pilgrimage to the Caaba under the banner of the League.
We shall spill as much blood as required.

* * * *

We want Pakistan, a proper division.
If it cannot be achieved by words, Muslims
Are not afraid to use swords and spears.

* * * *

Where are the Muslim youths ! We shall attain
The desire of their hearts by tying down the wild tiger.

* * * *

Come quickly, break down Somnath.
If you want freedom, Burn ! Burn ! Burn !
The *Jatu-Griha* (house made of lac), and let all trouble end."

The horror of August 16, 17, & 18

The spirit generated by utterances like the above found an outlet on the "Direct Action Day" of the Muslim League. The Day was celebrated with demonstrations all over India without any notable irritation except in Calcutta where from the midnight of August 15, organized bands of Muslims were seen moving about with various arms. The night was made noisy with cries, with slogans damning the Congress and the Hindus. Those who had hoped, as the present writer did, that the Day would not differ much from the demonstrations organized by the Congress directed against British policy and practice, had to revise their opinion on the morning of the 16th. With the break of the Day, in the morning of 16th August, Muslims went on the offensive all directed against the life and property of Hindus who formed the vast majority of the population of Calcutta and who were caught unready and unprepared for such treacherous assaults from next-door neighbours. All through the day raged this *inferno* of communal madness. The life of the city was delivered into the hands of murderer, the stabber, the lighter of fires. The Police, the guardians of law and order, stood as dolls in face of this anarchy. Brigadier Sixsmith, officiating commander, Bengal and Assam Area, gave an appreciation of the situation when the military under him took charge of it. "The Police had not hitherto fired a single round. In one or two cases tear gas had been used." The hand of the Police appeared to have been paralysed by the Chief Minister of Bengal, Mr. Huseyn Saheed Surhawardy, who combined in his person the office of Home Minister in charge of law and order. The full story of what people saw and heard in Calcutta during these three days can never be told. The horror of these days during which thousands lost their lives and many thousands more were injured and maimed was described by the Calcutta *Statesman*, a British-edited-and-controlled paper.

> "This is not a riot. It needs a word found in mediaeval history, a fury. Yet "fury" sounds spontaneous and there must have been some deliberation and organizations to set this fury on its way. The horde who ran about battering and killing with 8 ft. *Lathis* may have found them lying about or brought them out of their own pockets, but that is hard to believe. We have already commented on the bands who found it easy to get petrol and vehicles when no others were permitted on the streets. It is not mere supposition that men were imported into Calcutta to help making an impression."

In the leading article of the same issue entitled—*Disgrace Abounding*—(August 20) the paper repeated its verdict delivered two days earlier, condemning "the Bengal Government's lamentable failure in judgment and executive ability."

"Disgrace Abounding"

> "The origin of the appalling carnage and loss in the capital of a great Province, we believe the worst communal riot in India's history, was a political demonstration by the Muslim League. Bengal's is a Muslim League Ministry...... Of all India's provincial Ministries, the Bengal Ministry, therefore, as the outstanding League Ministry should have been the most scrupulous in ensuring that such a political demonstration caused no disturbance........
>
> "But instead of fulfilling this, it undeniably by confused acts of omission and provocation, contributed rather than otherwise to the horrible events which have occurred. No balanced person would charge it with having deliberately planned a catastrophe of such magnitude. Nevertheless, in retrospect, its conduct before the riots stands open to the inference—not only by its political opponents—that it was divided in mind on whether rioting of some sort would not be good or bad...........The bloody shambles to which this country's largest city has been reduced is an abounding disgrace, which owing to the Bengal Ministry's pre-eminence as a League Ministry has inevitably tarnished seriously the All-India reputation of the League itself."

Direct Action directed not against British Authority

In his speech concluding the session of the Council of the Muslim League on July 29, 1946, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had said: "Today we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it." Little did he think that his followers in Calcutta would be bringing the "pistol" into the arena of political life, the "pistol" directed not against the Government but against their neighbours. One of his followers Khwaja Nazimuddin of Bengal had declared that the Muslims were not "restricted to non-violence" attempting a hit at the policy of the Indian National Congress adopted under the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. He was asked on August 9, by a representative of the *United Press of India*, to clarify the implications of this "Direct Action" policy. He appeared to have been in an expansive mood, and elaborated these as follows: "There are hundreds and one ways in which we can create difficulties, specially when we are not restricted to non-violence. The Muslim population of Bengal knows very well what Direct Action would mean, and we need not bother to give them any lead." Those who have had experience in Calcutta of their sleep being disturbed by the blare of amplifiers during the period, August 1 to August 15, detailing the programme of "Direct Action", were left in no doubt of the murderous intentions lurking behind the words of the ex-Chief Minister of Bengal, Mr. Surhawardy's predecessor in this high position of dignity and responsibility. The party against whom the "Direct Action" was to be directed were the neighbouring community of Hindus; hand-bills, pamphlets and speeches were used to excite the hatred of Muslims against their neighbours, to direct attention to their wealth symbolized in many a mansion standing on both sides of the Chittaranjan Avenue passing through the heart of Calcutta, to excite the cupidity of the poor amongst Muslims against the rich amongst "Kafirs", Every mosque became a recruiting ground for this "Jehad", and the campaign in this behalf could go on because the Ministry in Bengal had been recruited from the Muslim League Party with its exclusive note on Muslim pretensions and Muslim separatism.

Story of Muslim grievances—false & exaggerated

The nature of the propaganda carried on can be best understood from the speech made by a colleague of Mr. Surhawardy in his Ministry, by Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed, a renegade Congressman who perverted himself on the eve of the 1946 election to secure a Muslim League ticket. The occasion for the speech was the no-confidence motions moved against the Surhawardy Ministry collectively and against Mr. Surhawardy individually as the Minister in charge of Law and Order in the Province. These were moved on the 19th September, 1946 in the Bengal Assembly and debated for two days; Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed's contribution towards explaining and excusing the "Great Calcutta Killing" went over history, the history of the period since the battle of the Plassey when exclusive rule over the country held by the classes represented in and through his predecessors came to end. His history was detailed as follows:

> "......before I go into the details of the recent happenings may I take my friends to the details of the historic background of the whole tragedy that has been witnessed in Bengal?
>
> Sir, who does not know how the Muslims of this Province were crushed, how Muslims all over India were crushed from 1757 to 1857? Then again, who does not know the confiscation proceedings that followed the occupation of Bengal—confiscation of Muslim properties, confiscation of mosques, confiscation of *Jaigirs*, confiscation of large Zamindaries belonging to Muslims were the order of the day; and these valuable properties were handed over to the Hindus."

This history was not at all true to facts, though Sir William Hunter's book on Indian Mussalmans, written sometime in the sixties of the 19th century, had sought to erect on it the platform of an exclusively Muslim grievance, the grievance of the Muslim aristocracy. For, by that time it became a British policy to excite and pander to the separatist conceits and ambitions of Muslims as a counter-blast to the rising public opinion in India being organized on an all-India basis with an appeal to all sections of the Indian people. Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed is not personally responsible for this misrepresentation of Indian history. His class had got into the habit of believing that their grievances were to be traced to the success of the Hindus in the struggle for existence precipitated by British methods of administration, exploitation and enlightenment in the country. His reference to confiscation proceedings would lead one to believe that in Bengal, the Muslims were made special victims of this. But the facts were otherwise, however, as the following from the Administration Report of Bengal, 1872-73, would go to show. Sir John Campbell was then the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province. British historians have said that the famine of 1769-'70 had caused "the ruin of two-thirds of the old aristocracy of Lower Bengal," and the developments that followed the Cornwallis Settlement of Land Revenue were summarized in this particular report, giving a considered judgment by a British administrator on the disastrous consequences of the 1793 measure after watching these for about a hundred years of economic *malaise*. The report does not show that the Permanent Settlement confined its victims to Muslims alone. The "Birbhum Zamindari" referred to in it was the Nawab family of the area; it can be accepted as a representative of all the interests affected by the Cornwallis Settlement which did not make any distinction between Hindu and Muslim properties as Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed would have us believe. The following from the report will enable our readers to understand the all-devouring nature of the alien State in India, brushing aside all considerations but its own profit.

> "The Government demand was then one which left a margin of profit, but small compared to that given to Zamindars in modern days. There was wide-spread default in the payment of the Government dues, and extensive consequent sales of the estates or parts of the estates for the recovering of arrears under the unbending system introduced in 1793...............By the end of the century the greater portion of the estates of Nadiya, Rajshahi, Bishanpur and Dinajpur Rajas had been alienated. The Burdwan estate was seriously crippled, and the Birbhum Zamindari (*Muslim Nawab estate—explanatory note ours*) was completely ruined. A host of smaller Zamindars shared the same fate. In fact, it is scarcely too much to say that within the ten years that followed the Permanent Settlement a complete revolution took place in the constitution and ownership of the estates which formed the subject of settlement."

Anglo-Muslim co-operation during this psriod (1946)

This quotation ought to discredit the propaganda on which the Muslim League had been thriving. The confiscation proceedings were no respector of persons and classes—Hindu and Muslim fell equal victims to these; *debottar* and *wakfs*, properties, attached to Hindu and Muslim religious minstrations, came under the hammer without partiality or discrimination. It may be that the Muslim classes suffered the more from these proceedings not because their opposite number amongst the Hindus were favoured but because the former had monopolized the perquisities of administration under the rule of Muslim kings, and the tallest of poppies received the first blow from the new rulers. But Sir William Hunter had presented a picture which became the stock-in-trade of the Muslim League exploiting the cupidity of the Muslim classes and the ignorance of the Muslim masses. To this interpretations of recent history must be traced the genesis of the bestiality that characterized the "Direct Action Day" celebrations of the Muslim League on August 16, 1946 and the days and months succeeding. The evil example set at Calcutta spread to Noakhali in East Bengal, disrupting the decencies of the civilised life, striking at the roots of society's life in its widest ramifications. As we write these lines, we are conscious of the unreality of this *post-mortem* examination of the causes of this shame and tragedy. The object of the Muslim League, the setting up of a separate State carved out of the boundaries of India, having been reached by methods of gangsterism, it may appear useless to recapitulate the events and their influence on India's evolving life. So also may appear to be the contribution of the British bureaucracy towards tolerating this break-down of ordered life in the country. But the publicist in India has it laid upon him to indicate the various ways in which Anglo-Muslim co-operation did help to effect this disruption. During the period we have been dealing with we have had a demonstration of the malignity of this tie-up between the Muslim League Ministry in Bengal and the British bureaucracy holding key positions in the administration of the Province. A British Governor, Sir Frederick Burrows, a member of the Trade Union Congress of Britain, the *elite* of the new ruling classes of the country, was the head of the administration; in his name as a representative of the British king the Province was being governed, the Council of Ministers aiding and advising him in this duty. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Walker, was a British member of the Indian Civil Service; he was the head of the bureaucracy. The Commissioner Police in Calcutta was Mr. Hardwick. This set-up imposed a special responsibility on them for peace and order in Bengal, as the custodian of the people's life, honour and property. Mr. Huseyn Saheed Surhawardy, as leader of the League Parliamentary Party in Bengal, was the Chief Minister of the Province. Under his advice, Sir Frederick Burrows is supposed to have ordered the 16th of August 1946, as a public holiday, thus making himself a participant in activities that were launched to make the Muslim "Direct Action Day" a success. Unconsciously, perhaps, he let himself into party politics. We cannot say the same thing of the Chief Secretary and of the Commissioner of Police. They had been in Bengal for years: they knew or ought to have known and understood the inner springs of politics in the Province. But on the 16th of August they so acted that murder, arson and loot were let loose over the most populous city in India, and the Police were found looking benevolently on this desolation. The leader of the Opposition in the Bengal Assembly, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, put the whole case in the few words he uttered during this particular debate discussing the administrative machinery of the Province.

"We have a suspicion that the posting of officers has been made in such a way that in some districts all the administrative officers from the District Magistrate to the Thana Officer are Muslims ....I do not wish to cast reflection on all Muslim officers, but it is an undeniable fact that the canker of communalism has affected the services. No Hindu feels safe, if the officer is a Muslim, and I believe that a Muslim feels the same if the officer is a Hindu. But unfortunately for the Hindus, with the advent of the Muslim League Ministry most of the key positions not reserved for Europeans have gone to Muslim officers. Even during the riots in Calcutta, Hindu officers have been transferred, and our protest was of no avail.........this conspiracy of crushing the minority community in Bengal began not with the Direct Action Day. It began much earlier. It began from the first Day the League Ministry took office (in 1937). It was their deliberate plan to fashion the administrative machinery in such a way that the minority community would be reduced to utter helplessness.........I have been told by a very high authority in Bengal that it is wrong of us to discriminate between official and official on account of religion. Sir, with due respect to that high person, I am obliged to say that I have never heard a more ridiculous proposition in my life. To recruit officers not for merit but on the basis of religion and community, and then to expect them to behave non-communally and impartially between community and community is to hope for the impossible, One of the worst things that the League Government has done is to introduce communalism in the State machinery..............."

Muslim League technique of their fight

This analysis of the central factor of official demoralization in Bengal explains part of the situation that had been going from bad to worse specially since 1937 when Mr. Abdul Karim Fazlul Huq became Chief Minister. The Ministry that he was able to set up was the product of a Coalition between the Muslim League members and those of the so-called Krishak-Praja party of which Mr. Huq happened to be the leader. He had defeated the Muslim League leader, Khwaja Nazimuddin in the election, but his spiritual affiliation to Muslim League ideology and practice made this coalition inevitable in the process of power politics. It was during this regime that the mischief described by Mr. Roy in the extract quoted above began with vigour and strength. The British bureaucracy, the more honourable amongst them, fretted against it. But they were helpless in face of a development that had been made part of a deliberate policy of their State at the altar of which reason, honesty and justice had to be sacrificed. This policy had been formed in response to the challenge of Indian Nationalism stirring its wings during the seventies of the last century. Much can be written on this subject, much has been written on it in earlier volumes of the *Indian Annual Register* since 1936. The enthronement of separate electorates in the constitutional changes associated with the names of Morley-Minto, of Montagu-Chelmsford left us in no doubt about the purpose and tendency of this infamous device of "divide and rule"; the Ramsay MacDonald "Communal Award" confirmed these doubts and fears. The Muslim League has since then gone from strength to strength on the crest of this separatism; Indian Nationalism has been fighting rear-guard actions that have been completely battered down; it accepted defeat by the decision of June 3, 1947, agreeing to a division of India into two States—the Indian Union and the Union of Pakistan. But this is anticipating events. The events dealt with in this part of the "Home Polity" of India were the dress rehearsal of this subversion of the values of India's unity and integrity that confront us today. The Muslim League realists distinguished from the idealists represented in the leadership of the Indian National Congress exploited British anxiety to retain their irresponsible hold over India; they went into written and unwritten partner-ship with the vested interests built up by Britain in this country. In Bengal where the Britishers had been entrenched in Clive Street, it was no secret that an Anglo-Muslim *entente* had become part of a more wide policy, and it was found that the twenty-five members of the Bengal Assembly, representing British interests exclusively in a House of 250 members, were always at the beck and call of the Muslim League Ministry. Even on the occasion of the two "no-confidence" motions against the Suhrawardy Ministry for its acts of omission and commission during those three days of panic and horror in August, 1946, the European party preferred to remain neutral, though the Calcutta *Statesman* had written on August 21, 1946, that "the present Muslim League Ministry's primary responsibility for the bloody shambles to which its capital had been reduced is......inescapable." The European party by helping the Ministry to retain its power has been responsible for twelve months of anarcly in Bengal which ended on August 15, 1947. when its regime ended with the partition of the Province into two States—West Bengal and East Bengal. The Calcutta paper we have quoted from indicated in the same article the course of events—the end of which could not be any other than separation. We do not know if Clive Street has gained anything from this development. But it was a fateful decision that its representatives took on September 20, 1946, by refusing to throw their weight against the Ministry. Authority in Bengal, represented by the Governor and his advisers in the permanent British bureaucracy, were evidently afraid to tackle the *genii* that they had themselves helped to release. The consquence we will allow the *Stateswan* to describe.

> But if Section 93 is not applied, and the present Bengal Ministry succeeds in remaining unchanged in power, then assuredly it would be held in active hatred and contempt, would be an object of sustained fear and detestation, in the eyes of disquietingly many of the Province's inhabitants—for the things done, and not done in Calcutta this month cannot reasonably be expected to be soon forgotten.

There were hopes lurking in the public mind that the failure of the Bengal Governor and the British bureaucracy in the Province would receive the attention of the Central Government as yet dominated over by the British elements, civil and military. It was expected that Governor-General Wavell would take steps to halt the process of disintegration in the Bengal administration, and that he would not refrain from taking drastic steps in this behalf. His Excellency as a war-leader with experience of ruthless dismissals of effete commanders failed to rise up to the occasion, to the needs of the critical situation. When the Bengal Governor stood discredited for his supineness, the Governor-General evidently did not think any the worse of him. Rather, in course of his broadcast on August 24, announcing the formation of the Interim Government only eight days after the Calcutta holocaust, he went out of his way to re-assure Provincial Governments that from this reconstitution of the Central Government they need not be anxious about their prerogatives.

> "In the field of Provincial Autonomy, the Provincial Governments have a very wide sphere of authority in which the Central Government cannot intervene. My new Government will not have only power, or indeed any desire to trespass on the field of Provincial Administration."

Plea of "Provincial Autonomy" & Calcutta tragedy

Without raising any fine constitutional point with regard to the competence of the Central Authority, to the limit of its authority faced by a situation that disgraced everybody concerned with affairs in Bengal, we would direct attention to the implications of Lord Wavell's statement so far as these touched on the deliberate infringement by a Provincial Government or its failure to protect the life, honour and property of millions of people subject to its jurisdiction. From Lord Wavell's handling of this affair, specially his statement on Provincial Autonomy, we are driven to the conclusion that his Excellency did not feel perturbed over this breakdown in Bengal of the machinery of administration Thereby he made possible all the abominations that happened during the next twelve months in Noakhali-Tipperah, in Bihar, in the western districts of the United Provinces and also those that disgraced the last days of his regime which ended sometime in March, 1947. We would not like to believe that this policy of turning the blind eye on Provincial recalcitrance was part of a deliberate plan of exposing the discordances in Indian life as an argument for the continuance of British rule over India. We would rather accept Lord Pethic Lawrence's appreciation of the Indian situation which he indicated in his House of Lords speech of February 25, 1947 that "British rule cannot be maintained in its existing basis with adequate efficiency after 1948." The British were helpless, felt themselves helpless in face of the elemental passions that appeared to threaten the basic principles of social life, not to speak of civilized existence. In Calcutta, the British Governor, the British Chief Secretary, and the British Commissioner of Police surrendered to forces of anarchy because there had been a Ministry which could trade on their softness for the Muslim League vowed to the disruption of Indian Nationalism,

Failure of Congress members in the Interim Government

But this failure of Lord Wavell raises another question that touched on the leadership of Indian National Congress which had agreed to accept office in his Government. Negotiations for this had reached success by the time the Muslim League celebrated its "Direct Action Day" on August 16, 1946 Eight days after, on the 24th August, Lord Wavell announced the names of twelve new members of his Executive Council—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Mr. Asaf Ali, Mr. Jagjiwan Ram, Dr. John Mathai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Syed Ali Zaheer and Mr. Cooverji Bhaba. The first seven names were representatives of the Congress. The Indian public has been kept in ignorance of their reactions to the bestiality that was released over Calcutta by the Muslim League Ministry's encouragement of and support to the "Direct Action Day" celebration. And when they found that the Governor-General was in no mood to exercise his special powers for the control of the Provincial Governments which had sinned against all canons of government and failed to preserve the life, honour and property of the people, did they not feel that this toleration by Lord Wavell of Muslim League's shameful demonstration at Calcutta called for a reconsideration of the conditions of co-operation that must have been settled with Lord Wavell before the days of horror? On the 2nd day of September, the Interim Government took office, and the Congress leaders who joined it did not appear to have applied their mind to the promulgation of any concrete measures for halting this debacle. They did not take the public into confidence with regard to any advice that they had tendered to the Governor-General in this behalf. As prospective members of his Executive Council it was their right and privilege to do so, and when they became full-fledged members of the Central Government in India, they could legitimately press on the Governor-General the imperative need of taking steps to intercept this deterioration in the machinery of administration In Bengal we saw the Governor agreeing to act as the instrument of a Ministry that had sabotaged the forces of law and order, that had put Muslim and British Police officers in key positions with a view to advance its frankly communalist interests, and to consolidate its power. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues in the Interim Government appear, however, to have failed to move Lord Wavell in the matter. Evidently they worked under the disadvantage of having accepted the "Provincial Autonomy" dispensation asserted with such positiveness in Lord Wavell's statement of August 24, 1946. But the "terrible lesson" (Pundit Nehru's words) of the tragedy in Calcutta does not appear to have had any influence on the Governor-General's complacence; neither did it warn the Congress members of the Interim Government that they had let themselves into an invidious position from where they would only be helpless witnesses of a demoralization of shameless proportion. Four or five days before Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru took office, he issued a statement on the Calcutta tragedy that had "shaken up" all men and women of good will in the country. But the words did not indicate any positive step that was under contemplation by Congress members of the Interim Government. The reason for it is not far to seek. The Wavell Government was committed to "Provincial Autonomy," and not even the "Great Calcutta Killing" could move them. Even the introduction of Congress members could not bring any change in the spirit and practice of this Administration Therefore did we miss in Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru's statement the note of vigorous action determined to stamp out the gangsterism that the Bengal Muslim League Ministry had made fashionable in the country. His condemnation did not take us far.

> The new development of violence, involving stabbing, arson and looting chiefly in the cities, obviously cannot be tolerated or else all organized life would become impossible. This has ceased to be merely communal or political. It is a challenge to every decent instinct of humanity, and it should be treated as such. What has led up to this, the incitements to violence, the direct invitations to the shedding of blood, are worthy of enquiry, so that effective action may be taken. For the present we are concerned with the immediate steps to be taken.. ...
>
> In the present then what are we to do? The responsibility for maintaining peace and order must necessarily fall on the Government and its Police forces......

The people could find no peace of mind in Punditji's prescription. The phenomenon of the Government and its Police force yielding to the appeals of narrow communalism has had a long history. That it erupted into the world's attention in August 1946, was to be traced to British policy and the weakening of British power in India.

Spread of the spirit of religiuos persecution in the villages

Punditji's satisfaction that the outburst of violence was limited to "cities" could not be long sustained. On October, 10, 1946, were enacted scenes of devastation in the country-side of Noakhali and Tipperah, two East Bengal districts which demonstrated that the campaign of hatred carried on by the Muslim League had infected the mind of the Muslim masses. Hundreds were killed, the majority of them earning members of families 50,000; men, women and children were forced to pervert from the faith of their fathers; women's honour became cheap, houses were set fire to and those that were spared had their materials looted. The scenes were reminiscent of the religious persecution in Europe when Roman Catholicism and Protestantism wrested for supremacy. The magistracy and the Police sided more often than not with the malefactors who moved in military formations. The ministry appointed a European Magistrate as a symbol of impartiality. But his subordinates were beyond his control, Two weeks later the same scene appeared in the province of Bihar, the victims being Muslims.

Murder, arson, loot, outrage on women—these were imported from Bengal.

Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru characterised the state of things obtaining in Calcutta. Noakhali-Tipperah and Bihar as "a competition in murder and bestiality." Describing the horror that he saw in Bihar, what "a simple and likeable peasantry can perpetrate when it loses all balance and sanity,'' he appeared to trace a nexus between Calcutta and Bihar, between Noakhali-Tipperah and Arrah-Bhagalpur. It is well-known that more than a million Biharis earn their livelihood in Calcutta, the vast majority of them as unskilled labourers, as mill workers, porters, rikshaw pullers etc. These poor people suffered from the Great Calcutta Killing, thousand of them losing their lives. Estimates vary with regard to the number of killed in Calcutta; the lowest is 4,000, and the highest is 10,000, according to Governor Twynham of the Central Province and Berar who happened to be present during those fateful days in Calcutta. The number of wounded was four times those of the killed. These men and women must have carried their tales of woe to the countryside in Bihar. The first riot occurred in Benibad on September 27; on October 8 was staged in Monghyr stabbing and killing. On 10th of October began murder, loot, arson, abduction and rape of women on a mass scale, "forcible conversion" of thousands. News of these reached the public about the 15th October. On the 25th October murder and arson began at Chapra on a scale more intensive than what had happened in East Bengal; these took as their pattern what had happened in Calcutta. Then hell was let loose over four districts in Bihar. The Calcutta *Statesman's* criticism of Bihar's disgrace was as valid as that of Bengal. On November 8, in an article entitled—*Disgraced Also* it wrote:

> "A pogrom of such magnitude could hardly happen without premonitory signs. Yet, as previously in Bengal, the local Administration seems to have been caught unawares............
>
> Bihar, however, has at last been relatively fortunate in this: that the services of more eminent personages have been promptly available to her than to forlorn Bengal in her several earlier afflictions. The Governor's absence at the critical time has indeed evoked remark. But among the influential visitors from the Centre, Pundit Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Kripalani have all been trenchant and unsparing in denunciation of barbarities wrought by their co-religionists upon a minority weak in numbers."

Contrast between Central Government behaviour towards Bengal and Bihar

The British daily did not draw the obvious moral from the presence of Central Government personages in Bihar in contrast to their absence from Bengal. When the "Great Calcutta Killing" occurred, there were no Congress representatives in the Central Government, and Lord Wavell was the "dictator" so to say who preferred to have murder and burning in the biggest city in India rather than disturb the "Provincial Autonomy" device of authority. If the Muslim stabbed the Hindu in Calcutta and set fire to Hindu houses and *vice versa*, Lord Wavell and his subordinate, Sir Frederick Burrows, did not have any reason to be perturbed, as no British life or honour or property had been attacked. When on September 2, 1946, Congress representatives entered Lord Wavell's Government, they found before them a wall of bureaucratic precedents stopping them from any look into affairs in Bengal.

When the same killing occurred in Bihar, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru could throw himself into the rescue of the Province because the League members felt interested in the fate of the victims in contrast to their indifference to those in Bengal, and they raised no objections on the plea of "Provincial Autonomy." This was the reason why Bihar was "relatively fortunate" while Bengal had to burn for 12 months; the woes of West Bengal at least came to an end on August 15, 1947. Speaking of November 1946, the *Statesman* could bear testimony to the services of Congress leaders to the quick restoration of peace to Bihar. Writing on November 13 an article entitled —*A Great Calamity*—the paper said: .

> "Not only does Bihar's tragedy resemble Bengal's worst one in severity. There can be found dismal similarity in other particulars. Governors slow-moving or not on the spot; Ministers apparently at the outset divided in mind whether some rioting would not be good or bad, and later, amidst the crisis of carnage, quite incapable of disciplining the mob. An administrative machine deficient in perspicacity and precautions and exhibiting in parts disquieting symptoms of a fundmental mental demoralizing.... ......
>
> ....Pundit Nehru has not only again shown exemplary physical and moral courage; more important, he exhibited complete disregard, in India's and humanity's interests, of formidable criticism from narrow-minded members of his own community—both inside and outside the Province................

"Competition in murder and bestiality on the increase"

If the leadershfp of the Muslim League had risen as high as Punditjee to the challenge of gangsterism, the face of history in India would not have been disfigured by mutual destructiveness, and the course of history would have taken a nobler and wider line of human dignity and understanding. The lesson of Bihar did not bring any change in the spirit of Muslim League's dream nor any improvement in their manners and practices; the risks that Congress leadership took in championing the cause of the dupes of Muslim League propaganda were lost upon Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Lord Wavell who facilitated the entrance of Muslim League members into his Executive Council had no appreciation of the tricks of the Muslim League; or it may be that he had his own game to play which happened to coincide with that of Mr. Jinnah. Years hence when many of the present observers of this game will have passed into the Beyond, history will bring evidence of a deep Anglo-Muslim conspiracy that has not proved beneficial to British interests at all. During the Wavell regime Calcutta, Noakhali, Tipperah, Bihar and West Punjab were allowed to slip back into anarchy, and a man who was regarded as a master strategist in the arts of war and on which record he had been pitchforked into the high position of Governor-General of India demonstrated before all the world that his failure in the Burma campaign reflected a certain moral obliquity that made his term as head of the Indian administration a fitting close to British rule over India. The leadership of the Muslim League detected this weakness in Lord Wavell's character, and exploited it for all that it was worth. We will be sorry to believe that Lord Wavell was a conscious instrument of this dangerous policy that played with the life, honour and property of millions of men and women. But power politics deadens people's sensibilities of the True and the Good. We, therefore, found that the Bihar disaster called forth a less strong sense of abhorrence than what had followed the "Great Calcutta Killing." The criticism of the Calcutta *Statesman*, for instance, of the failure of Authority in Bihar was couched in language of less virulence than what appeared in the third week of August. 1946. After Calcutta, Muslims in Noakhali-Tipperah behaved worse than beasts. Bihar Hindus appeared to have improved upon this bestiality. The leadership of the Muslim League by working on the abominations of Calcutta and East Bengal lost their moral right to point the finger of reprobation at the happenings in Bihar. Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah could only plead that there should be exchange of population from areas where majorities were liable to yield to the temptation of murdering their neighbours of the minority communities, of dishonouring their womanhood, of burning their houses and looting their properties. The Muslim League had established this pattern of conduct on the 16th August, 1946. Such conduct appears to have strengthened their claims to seats in Lord Wavell's Executive Council.

Going into the Interim Government with a view "to get a foot-hold" for Pakistan

The "Great Calcutta Killing" opened the door of this Council to the nominees of the Muslim League, and their representatives entered the Interim Government by the last week of October, 1946 seven weeks after the Congress, Sikh and other smaller minority representatives. They had made no secret of the purpose which took them to the Interim Government; they would be there as "sentinels" of exclusively Muslim League interests, to use Mr. Jinnah's word ; "we are going into the Interim Government to get a foot-hold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan," to quote from a speech delivered at Lahore by Mr. Gaznafar Ali Khan, member designate of Interim Government. Lord Wavell's tactics in introducing the Muslim League element into his Executive Council without proper guarantee of good behaviour, without getting the non-coperation with the proposed Constituent Assembly resolution of the Muslim League cancelled by a proper resolution of the Council of the All-India Muslim League was sharp practice when we remember the dire consequences of that step, There was another factor to be considered in this connection. The Congress members of the Interim Government had agreed to join it after being satisfied with the scheme of powers which they will be able to exercize even under the 1919 Act. The *Hindu* of Madras published in its issue of August 14 what purported to have been the thoughts and ideas of "circles close to the Viceroy" as regards the powers of the new Government. This speculation was wired by the paper's Delhi correspondent. He referred to Lord Wavell's letter to Moulana Abul Kalam Azad on May 30 when the Congress President had raised this particular question in the letter of May 25, using the following words . "Even without any change in the law there could be some formal understanding by which the Congress Working Committee may be assured that the Interim Government would in practice function like a Dominion Cabinet.'' Lord Wavell appeared, however, to have refused to commit himself to any such "formal understanding;" he recognized "the importance" attached by the leadership of the Congress to "a satisfactory definition of the powers of the Interim Government." But his Excellency's difficulty appeared to have been that "the most liberal intentions may be almost unrecognizable when they have to be expressed in a formal document." Moulana Azad referred also to the "last conversation" he had with Lord Wavell in course of which his Excellency appeared to have expressed his 'intention to function as the constitutional head of the Government and that in practice the Interim Government would have the same powers as that of a Cabinet in the Dominions." Lord Wavell questioned the accuracy of this report of the "conversation"—"I am quite clear that I did not state to you that the Interim Government would have the same powers as a Dominion Cabinet."

"The whole constitutional position is entirely different. I was sure that His Majesty's Government would treat the new Interim Government with the same close consultation and consideration as a Dominion Government."

"His Majesty's Government have already said that they will give to the Indian Government the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day to day administration of the country; I need hardly assure you that it is my intention faithfully to carry out this undertaking."

Joint responsibility repudiated by Muslim League nominees

We do not know if the leaders of the Congress in their negotiations with Lord Wavell in August, 1946 that enabled them to join his Government could get a more definite "undertaking" than what is implied in the quotation above, if his Excellency agreed to have a "Gentleman's Agreement" in this matter more binding that what is implied in the words above. But whatever be the basis of the speculation wired by the Madras daily's correspondent, it appears that the Congress nominees of the Interim Government decided to carry on the administration on the principle of joint responsibility animating their conduct; their non-Congress colleagues also accepted this device of rule. But the Muslim League members when they agreed to join the Interim Government did so with the declaration that they did not recognise this principle and would refuse to act under it. This decision of theirs did not help them to protect and advance exclusively Muslim interests which were over the major part of the country subject to the sense of justice of the majority community of Hindus. Bihar's outburst demonstrated that even membership of the Interim Government on the part of the Muslim League did not have the consequence desired, that the Muslim League members would be "sentinels" over Muslim interests. It only showed that the pattern of conduct made fashionable by the Muslim League propganda of hatred had at last infected the "mild Hindus" and that the stage was being laid for mass murders and other abominations over wide sstretches in India.

The Wavell technique of sabotage of united action in India

We have already said that we would like to believe that the Wavell technique did not desire the outburst of these bestialities, though it was difficult to hold fast to this faith in British human nature. There has not come out of Lord Wavell's lips any word of explanation of his complacene in the matter of the "Great Calcutta Killing." The law had endowed him with powers of intervention when a Provincial Government failed in its duty, when the forces of anarchy were let loose by a Provincial Ministry in the pursuit of its policy of grab and of sabotage of the forces of the composite Nationalism in our country. The sin of the Suhrawardy Ministry in this matter is beyond any doubt. The Governor, Sir Frederick Burrows, and the Governor-General Lord Wavell, were morally and legally competent to interefere with and interdict the anti-social activities of this Ministry; they had reserve powers in this behalf. That they did not exercise these we have seen through twelve months of communal frenzy in Bengal. Why they chose to adopt this attitude of indifference to human sufferings, we will never know. But it is liable to the ugliest of interpretations Lord Wavell by his activities since the entrance into his Executive Council of Muslim League representatives had given occasions for these. He let them in by the back-door so to say, without getting them to cancel the "Direct Action" resolution, without getting a guarantee from them to sincerely co-operate with the Constituent Assembly, scheduled to meet on December 9, 1946. It was reported at the time that Lord Wavell had told Congress leaders that he had assurances from the Muslim League leader in this behalf. Mr. Jinnah publicly denied these, and Lord Wavell could or did say nothing to challenge this story. Instead, he was found anxiously exploiting the situation created by the presence of Muslim League members in his government; he gave the go-bye to the principle of joint responsibility, of his Council acting as a Cabinet. We do not know the details of the differences that cropped up inside Lord Wavell's Executive Council so soon after its reconstruction with the inclusion of representatives nominated by the Muslim League. We can imagine them upsetting the arrangements and the policies and practices followed by the Interim Central Government since September 2, 1946, their making it difficult to smoothly run the administration. They were creating separate "cells" in the Secretariat at New Delhi with the Muslim cadre exclusively, a sort of "fifth column" ever on the look-out for loop-holes for mischief. We can share the feeling of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru when he said that since the entrance of the Muslim League nominees Lord Wavell had been "removing one by one the wheels of the Cabinet coach," and bringing it to a stand-still, so that the Central Government could not do anything in the line on which the Congress leaders had hoped to advance the reconstruction of the country's economy. Lord Wavell was either weak or deliberately mischievous when he could not bring the Muslim League leader to cancel the resolution passed on July 29. 1946, withdrawing support from the Cabinet Delegation's Plan of May 16, 1946. In the paragraph 9 of the letter of October 4, in reply to Mr. Jinnah's letter of October 3, Lord Wavell pointedly said: "Since the basis for participation in the Cabinet is, of course, acceptance of the Statement of the 16th May, I assume that the League Council will meet at a very early date to reconsider its Bombay resolution." The Muslim League nominees were allowed to join the Interim Government on the strength of this assumption. For, we do not get any response from the Muslim League leader to Lord Wavell's suggestion. On the 26th of October Muslim League nominees formally took office. On the 28th October, Mr. Jinnah released to the Press certain of the letters that had passed between him and Lord Wavell *re* the conditions and terms under which his nominees were prepared to join Lord Wavell's Executive Council. Three were from Mr. Jinnah and four from Lord

Wavell. There is in none of the former's letters written after the 4th October, on the 13th October, on the 14th October, on the 24th October—any hint that he understood the significance of Paragraph 9 of the letter of October 4, quoted above. Mr. Jinnah simply ignored it. Lord Wavell allowed him to ignore this "basis for participation in the Cabinet" by Muslim League nominees. Why, he has never cared to explain. On the other hand, as late as October 23, 1946, he wrote a letter to Pundit Nehru, giving him an assurance in the following words :

> "I have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah whom I have seen to-day that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government is conditional on the acceptance of the Scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the Statement of May 16, and that he must call his Council at an early date to agree to this.
>
> "As I told you, Mr. Jinnah has assured me that the Muslim League will come into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating... ...."

Mutuality of suspicion—Congress, League & British

On the 23rd November, 1946, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru released to the Press certain extracts from letters written by him to Lord Wavell and from the replies thereto, an extract from which appears above. These show that Congress members of the Interim Government had reasons to suspect that the Muslim League would not be playing straight, and we find their leader writing to Lord Wavell on October 14 expressing these suspicions—suspicion of Lord Wavell's integrity even. With a view to understand their attitude the following rather long extract should be quoted.

> "It is important for us to understand exactly how he (Mr. Jinnah) proposes to join and what these terms are to which he refers. Various statements in newspapers, and more specially in the official Muslim League organ, are disconcerting in the extreme. Our past experience does not encourage us to rely on vague and ambiguous phrases........... It is desirable, therefore, to be precise in such matters and to know exactly where we stand.
>
> "We know the terms of your broadcast in August last, and I have seen your letter to Mr. Jinnah dated October 4. I have not seen your letter to him dated October 12. (Mr. *Jinnah has not also cared to have it published along with the others which he had released to the Press and which appeared on October 30.—This comment is ours*). I trust that this does not contain anything beyond what was contained in your broadcast or the letter of October 4. If so, we should be informed of it, so that we might know what the exact position is.
>
> "It seems to us much better that any possible misunderstanding should be removed at this stage, so that it may not come later on............... During the last six weeks........ ....about every decision of ours,............ has been taken after joint consultation and agreement. This has made us jointly responsible for the working of the various departments................. How far the Muslim League members share this outlook with us, I do not know. Any other approach will lead to friction and delay.................. In any event we think it necessary for us to know as fully as possible the terms to which Mr. Jinnah refers in his letter of October 13. If there is any variation or addition to them as contained in your broadcast or your letter of October 4, we should be informed of it.

Reference to "variation or addition"—twice repeated by Nehru

Our readers will have noticed that Pandit Nehru referred to "anything beyond what" may be contained in the letter of October 12 to Mr. Jinnah ; to "variation or addition" to the terms of Muslim League participation in the Interim Government, contained in the August broadcast of Lord Wavell or his letter of October 4. The note of suspicion is struck twice. It could not have been pleasant to the Governor-General, and he sent to Pandit Nehru on the 15th October his letter to Mr. Jinnah written on October 12th. To remove the incorrigible suspicion in the mind of the Vice-President of his Executive Council he wrote in the same letter: "There have been no assurances or explanations to Mr. Jinnah that go beyond the terms of the broadcast and the letter of October 4 and 12." This suspicion was, however, fully justified. The various interpretations on the question of "Grouping" contained in the May 16, 1946 Statement of the Cabinet Delegation were the latest to point to the source of Indo-British estrangement. Lord Wavell must have felt the sting of this reference, twice repeated. And the last four lines of his letter of October 15, quoted above, were his reaction to this suspicion. But he had nothing reassuring to say to his colleagues about their apprehension on the "outlook" of the Muslim League nominees. His letters to Pandit Nehru that have been published did not give us any idea about how he felt about "joint responsibility" under which his new colleagues had been trying to function or whether or not he had made it a condition precedent of Muslim League participation in his "Cabinet" (*This word was used by him in the letter to Mr. Jinnah dated October 4.*) We are sure that he knew the mind of the Muslim League leader on this "Cabinet" idea of work, that Mr. Jinnah had been opposed to it since 1940 (August) when Lord Linlithgow had given him certain assurances. During his many interviews with Lord Wavell on the days in October, 1946, he must have re-iterated his opposition. We do not know if the latter ever tried to reason him out of it or whether or not he felt that the new entrants to his "Cabinet" would be introducing an element of "inner conflict" as there had been "outer conflicts" in India.

Use of words Cabinet or Coalition "Government" in a ceremonial sense ?

Whatever be the fact, his letters to Pandit Nehru did not contain any reference to show that His Excellency was in the least worried over the advertized intransigence of the Muslim League nominees. He appeared to be more concerned with making it easy for Mr. Jinnah's followers to get into his "Cabinet" without troubling to think whether they could be made to fit into it or not, whether or not they agreed to share the responsibilities inherent in a "Cabinet" system of rule. It may be that when he used the word "Cabinet" in his letter to Mr. Jinnah dated October 4, 1946, he did not intend the word to mean any serious change in the spirit and structure of the Indian Administration. It was a fashionable word to use, of no constitutional significance worth much troubling about. He was satisfied or appeared to be satisfied with the Muslim League leader's assurance that his nominees will be coming into the "Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating," and he was satisfied with the role of being the post office to carry on October 23 this assurance to the President of the Congress who also happened to occupy the position of Vice-President of his own Executive Council And when Mr Jinnah showed his teeth almost as soon as he had got his proteges inside this Council, Lord Wavell did not appear to have resented in any way this double-dealing. Mr. Jinnah had in July, 1946, charged His Excellency with this lapse.

And, perhaps, he was now in November patting himself on the back with the way in which he had been able to so soon get even with the war lord turned politician On November 14, 1946, he unburdened himself to representatives of the foreign Press at New Delhi, and made his position clear. He did not regard the new set-up in the Central Government of India either as a Cabinet or as a Coalition Government; it was simple "the Executive Council of the Governor-General formed under the Government of India Act of 1919." He appeared to be satisfied with this arrangement, he was not prepared to disturb it, to advance "in action" if not in theory from the irresponsibility of the Governor-General. He appeared to swear by this freedom of Lord Wavell from Indian control; he wanted neither responsible Government nor "Dominion status in action"; he refused to advance with the times even if the British Government appeared to be so. To representatives of the foreign Press he declared:

> "The Interim Government should not be allowed to do any thing administratively or by convention which would in any way prejudice or militate against the problem of the future constitution of India, and we shall certainly resist any attempt which directly or indirectly prejudices or militates against our demand of Pakistan."

Jinnah's intention "of co-operating" with Central Government and Constituent Assembly"

In course of the same Press conference, Mr. Jinnah was asked whether or not he had decided to call a meeting of the Council of the Muslim League with a view to get cancelled the resolution on non-co-operation with the Cabinet Delegation's May 16, (1946) Plan, as he had promised to Lord Wavell. His reply was prompt—"No, I have not." This reply must have told Lord Wavell how the Muslim League leader proposed to honour his promise of "co-operating" with the Constituent Assembly. On November 21, Mr. Jinnah came out in his true colours. On November 20, invitations had been sent over Lord Wavell's signature calling upon members of the Constituent Assembly elected by Provincial Legislative Assemblies, to assemble at New Delhi to transact business according to the scheme outlined in *Clause 19 (i)* of the statement of the Cabinet Delegation made on the 16th of May, 1946; the Chief Commissioners' Provinces to be represented by the members elected in 1946 by the Delhi and the Ajmer Merwara constituencies and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council. The League leader's reaction to this invitation was an abusive outburst against Lord Wavell: "It is quite obvious that the Viceroy is blind to the present serious situation and the realities facing him, and is entirely playing into the hands of the Congress and is appeasing them in complete disregard of the Muslim League and other organizations and elements in the national life of the country." There was an element of the ludicrous in the way in which Mr. Jinnah constituted himself into a guardian of "other" elements of the life of India. The "Scheduled" castes had during the 1946 election demonstrated their allegiance to the national movement; the Sikhs were vowed to opposition to the pretensions of the Muslim League. But the outburst on the present occasion gained importance by the declaration—

> "In these circumstances, it is obvious that no representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly, and the Bombay resolution of the League Council passed on July 29, stands............

"I want to make it clear that no representative of the Muslim League should attend the Constituent Assembly summoned to meet on December 9"

Muslim League betrayal and British Government's last minute attempt to salvage Cabinet Delegation Plan

This is how Mr. Jinnah broke his promise to Lord Wavell. The Governor-General, however, silently pocketed this insult; why, we will never know. High "policy" must have played its part in sabotaging the working of the Constituent Assembly. At the time of writing this study in February, 1948, six months after the Muslim League have had its Pakistan, we can view matters with a certain amount of detachment. As Mr. Jinnah's declaration of November 21 made his plan plain that he had never any "intention" to co-operate with Congress members in the Interim Government, the question was raised why did not Lord Wavell and the British Government ask the Muslim League nominees to quit their places in that Government? Did Lord Wavell once try to put the matter to this test? We have not heard that he ever did it. The tenure of offices in the Interim Government depended on the implementation of the Constituent Assembly Plan. The Muslim League by refusing to co-operate in the work of the Assembly forfeited their right to these offices. But the British Government must have had their own reasons in tolerating this breach of promise. Their point of view might have been expressed by the London *Times* speaking of "elementary justice," though hardly anybody in India could be taken in by this plea. We find, therefore, Mr. Attlee, Britain's Prime Minister, trying to salvage the Cabinet Delegation's Plan. He invited Congress and League leaders to a conference in London, both official and non-official, and the Sikh leader, Sardar Baldev Singh, "to urgently discuss the situation before any untoward action takes place......to help towards smooth and rapid progress towards the goal of Indian Freedom.' (*Attlee's letter to Nehru—November, 27, 1946*) But this was a last minute intervention. Political circles in Delhi had been busy with stories of disintegration of the Interim Government. The writings in the British Press reflected the growing realization by the London Government of the failure of their Delegation's Plan. The Muslim League nominees had formally taken office on the 26th October, 1946 and within thirty days they managed to make good their threat that they would not allow joint responsibility to influence their thoughts and activities. On the 21st of November, 1946, in the comparative freedom of the platform of the annual session of the Indian National Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, vice-President of the Executive Council and member in charge of External Affairs and Commonwealth Department, lifted a part of the veil behind which lay a disunited Central Government of India. In course of a speech made to the Subjects Committee of the annual session of the Indian National Congress held after a lapse of six years, he said that "the atmosphere in the new Central Government after the League's entry has become so strained that Congress members had twice threatened to resign." Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, member in charge of the Home Department dealing with questions of law and order all over the country being one of its concerns, bluntly characterized the Wavell-League technique as "an attempt to get the Congress out of the Interim Government". The London *Times* was found supporting Lord Wavell in "his reluctance to over-ride" the authority of even those Provincial Governments which had demonstrably failed to maintain law and order though it was one his special responsibilities. A despatch appeared in its issue of November 22-23 sent by the special Delhi correspondent of this paper throwing light on these internal differences in the Central Government of the country. It struck a note of failure : "A further implication of what is now the open rift in the body politic, is that the country is faced with the possibility of the collapse of the very foundation of the constitutional project contained in the Cabinet Mission's proposals of May 16." The paper editorially emphasized this fear in its issue of November 27 ; "There is a grave threat, to say the least of it, that the policy of His Majesty's Government, as laid down by the Cabinet Mission, will cease to afford means of co-operation in the transfer of power to Indian hands." And in the next day's article the paper held the mirror to the real mind of the ruling classes of Britain which can be interpreted both as a threat to Indian Nationalism and as an indication of the shape of things to come in India as it precipitated itself on June 3rd, 1947, nearly seven months later. We quote it below.

> The British cannot consent to hand over responsibility to a single political party without reference to the rights of other groups, or place the governments of Muslim majority Provinces at the unfettered discretion of a Hindu-controlled Central Government. If the kind of agreement which is represented by the State Paper cannot be secured, the unity of India which is a great achievement of the past century must inevitably be sacrificed to the higher interests of elementary justice.

"Succession Government or Governments of British India"

The leadership of Indian Nationalism has long been familiar with this logic of disruptive politics encouraged in India by British Governments of successive generations. The London paper's declaration could not have, therefore, come to them as a new statement of a policy. The Cabinet Delegation might have come with the best of intentions. But their line of discussion with representatives of various interests in India left no doubt in the minds of discerning observers that their brief cases contained schemes that came near the desperate solution indicated in the London paper's article. In the last volume of the *Register* in course of the discussion on the Cabinet Delegation's activities, we referred (P. 118) to the significance of the use of the words—"succession Government or Governments of British India"—which appeared in the 'Memorandum on States Treaties and Paramountcy" sent on May 12th 1946, to the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes who significantly again happened to be the Nawab of Bhopal whose State in Central India has for long been one of the asylums of many of the fomentors of Muslim exclusiveness, dreamer of the revival of Muslim hegemony over this country. At the time when this Memorandum was sent—we can take it that it was written sometime before either at London or Delhi—these words did not appear to have received the attention that their use deserved. Now, in the context of the London *Times'* declaration, the paper having for more than half-a century been regarded as reflecting British Government's view-point, and the subsequent events that took definite shape in April-May, 1947, and the partition of the country finalized on June 3, 1947, we can regard it as a fact that the Labour Government of Britain had decided in its mind that "the higher interests of elementary justice" required the disruption of India's unity and integrity as early as November, 1946, if not seven months earlier. We do not know whether or not the leaders of the Congress had knowledge of this decision during April-July 1946 when they were engaged in negotiations with the Cabinet Delegation Even when some of them agreed to join Lord Wavell's Government and did formally join it on September 2, 1946, did they have any inkling of this decision? We do not know, because we have been denied the knowledge of the terms and conditions under which co-operation between Congress leaders and Lord Wavell became possible.

Congress had not accepted the May 16 Plan from the beginning—the League did not on July 29

We know it for a fact, however, that the latter after having got representative Congress leaders into his Executive Council started his negotiations to get the representatives of Muslim League as well inside it. We know how he was tricked by Mr. Jinnah or was a willing victim to the trick; he had been put off with a promise of "co-operating with the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly." But to all requests for cancellation of the July 29 resolution, Mr. Jinnah turned a deaf ear. We find Lord Wavell writing on November 5 to the Muslim League leader: 'Before I went on my visit to Bengal and Bihar I spoke to you about summoning your Council with a view to their accepting the Statement of May 16. I hope you will arrange to do that at an early date." It took Mr. Jinnah 15 days to frame a reply; there was no reference to summoning his Council. Instead, we have the thesis about the sins of the Congress, an attempt to prove that "the Congress have not accepted the Statement of May 16 from the beginning." He evidently referred to the Congress argument about "Grouping" which differed from that of the Cabinet Delegation. The idea that appears to have been revolving in the Muslim League leader's mind was that if the Congress can remain in the Interim Government with this refusal to accept the Cabinet Delegation's interpretation notwithstanding, the Muslim League was entitled to be there in spite of their July 29 resolution with-drawing support from both the May 16 Plan, known as the long-term plan of forming a constitution for India by a Constituent Assembly and the June 16 Plan, known as the short-term Plan of an Interim Government representative of all classes and parties of British India. Lord Wavell and the London Government accepted this plea and allowed the Muslim League nominees to stay inside the Interim Government where they constituted an element of demoralization among the officialdom, encouraging all recalcitrant forces in the country. There was no finesse in their tactics; the way in which the Muslim League nominees of the Interim Government surrounded themselves with Muslim officials, drawing them from their loyalty to the Government as a whole, creating cells of conspiracy in almost every department of the State, laid the foundation of the disruption which overtook the country. We do not know the reasons that prompted the British Government to tolerate this break-down in the morale of the personnel of the Administration, and cannot see how they hoped to profit from this betrayal of their trust. We should like to know if the British authorities in London ever had any occasion to realize the dangerous possibilities of this playing with the integrity of the official set-up they had erected in India, how this tactics would be transforming the instrument of their rule into saboteurs of their character. If they ever did it, they did it rather late, six months after the Wavell experiment of double dealing. For, we find the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence, acknowledging in the House of Lords on the 25th February 25, 1947, the defeat of this policy. In announcing that the Labour Government proposed to recall British power from India by June, 1948, his lordship said: "The advice we have received from responsible authorities in India has been that taking all circumstances into account British rule cannot be maintained in its existing basis with adequate efficiency after 1948:" But in October-November, 1946, the Wavell technique of balancing the forces represented by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League respectively was on its trial. The London Government allowed the Governor-General to introduce Congress nominees and those of the League into the inner counsels of the Administration and to play one against the other. Thereby it appeared to have postponed the evil day when the choice will have to be made one way or the other whether Britain should retire with dignity, with some remnants of it at least, or make an attempt "for a short while to restore the old position of complete control by the British Raj." The time we have been dealing with was occupied with this experiment. Therefore we find the London Government making an attempt to stage a Round Table Conference at London with a view to persuade the leaders of the Congress and the League to make it up and to co-operate in making a constitution for the future governance of India through the Constituent Assembly suggested on the May 16, (1946) Statement or Plan of the Cabinet Delegation and of the Governor-General.

U S. Government's Interest in this Conference

It appears that there were people in high authority other than those in Britain who felt themselves drawn into an interest in these negotiations. Mr. Dean Acheson, acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the United States Administration, gave expression to their concern that the decisions of the Indian leaders "at this moment in history may directly affect world peace and prosperity for generations to come." He did not confine himself to this high argument alone, but referred to the purpose of the London Conference in unambiguous terms.

"The crux of the internal problem now confronting appears to arise from differences of opinion between the two principal parties as to the conditions under which Provinces can elect to join or remain out of the Sub-Federations in North-West and Nort-East India.

"I am confident that if the Indian leaders show the magnanimous spirit which the occasion demands they can go forward together on the basis of the clear provisions on this point contained in the constitutional Plan proposed by the British Cabinet Mission last spring to forge an Indian Federal Union in which the elements of the population will have ample scope to achieve their legitimate political and economic aspirations."

Pundit Nehru conveys to British Government Congress reaction to Conference proposal

This statement of United States interest in Indian affairs was made on December 3, 1946, when the Congress and League leaders were in London, invited there to straighten out the differences that had stood between the two predominant political parties and schools of thought in India. The reaction of the Congress leaders to this invitation was not at all encouraging. They felt that the proposed Conference would be, or is likely to be, used as an occasion for "a re-opening of the various decisions arrived at since the visit of the Cabinet Delegation to India."

There was frankness in this statement of Congress attitude towards the proposal of a new Conference at London. It was explained in course of a letter to Lord Wavell dated November 26, 1946.

"............It would appear that the proposal (of a Conference at London) involves a re-opening and re-consideration of the various decisions arrived at since the visit of the British Cabinet Delegation to India. The Muslim League accepted places in the Government on the very clear understanding that they also accepted the long-term proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16. Indeed, they could not join the Government otherwise. But, now the League have announced very definitely that they will not participate in the Constituent Assembly. We attach, as you are aware, great importance to the holding of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed, namely, December 9. The invitation to us to go to London appears to us to re-open the whole problem which was settled to a large exent in the Cabinet Mission's statement and the formation of the Interim Government ....

"We are convinced, however, that our leaving India now would mean that, at the instance of the League, the Cabinet Mission's Plan is going to be abandoned or substantially varied, and that we are parties to it. It would mean giving in to the League's intransigence and incitement to violence, and this would have disastrous consequences. The first thing to be certain about is that plans agreed to will be implemented, and that there will be a continuity of policy. There has been suspicion enough. Any addition to it will wreck the whole scheme and make it difficult to replace it by another..........."

To this letter the whole or the substance of which was cabled to the Prime Minister of Britain, the latter sent a reply on November 28 through Lord Wavell assuring Pundit Nehru about his Government's attitude.

"The object of our talks would be to try and ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December 9. There is no intention of abandoning either the decision of the Assembly to meet, or the plan put forward by the Cabinet Delegation. It is our desire to see that this is implemented in full and not to abandon or alter it. ...."

In reply to this, Pundit Nehru sent to Mr. Attlee on the same day through the Governor-General, a grudging acceptance of the invitation to London, taking occasion to re-state and re-emphasize the Congress stand-point.

"As we have repeatedly stated, we accept the Cabinet Delegation plan in its entirety. In regard to certain interpretations we made our position perfectly clear to the Delegation and we have proceeded accordingly since then. We have further stated that in the event of different interpretations, the matter should be referred to the Federal Court, and we shall abide by the Court's decision. In regard to this, our position is quite clear, and we are completely committed to it. We are unable to change it and have no authority to do so. Hence our visiting London for this purpose is not necessary."

"...........if in spite of this, or because you desire to consider other matters, you desire us to come, we shall endeavour to do so. But we shall have to return by December 9, in time for the Constituent Assembly..........

Trying to re-open all the constitutional issues decided since May 1946

On the same day Mr. Attlee replied that he noted what had been said about "the position of the Congress," but "none-the-less we feel that a visit by you before the Constituent Assembly meets would be of great value." So we found Pundit Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh leaving for London with many misgivings but "out of politeness' to the London Government, as Sardar Patel characterized the visit. Their misgivings were caused by past experience of British double-dealing, extracting concessions and then confronting their opponents with fresh interpretations of the deliberately vague commitments or promises. On the present occasion also opportunity for such cleverness cropped up. Pundit Nehru had wanted to pin down the proposed conference to a specific issue, that about the different interpretations put on Para 19 Clause 5 and Para 19 Clause 8 of the Cabinet Mission's plan of May 16, 1946. He expressed on behalf of the Congress the feeling that the proposed conference was motivated by the purpose of "re-opening" the various decisions on constitutional issues taken since the visit of the Cabinet Delegation They knew that the Muslim League leader, Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, had been pressing for a *de novo* consideration of them all, for a postponement of the Constituent Assembly. The Congress was totally opposed to this, and in Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru's letters of November 26 and November 28, intended for the British Prime Minister, he made the position clear beyond any possible misunderstanding in the future. The correspondence between Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Attlee or Lord Wavell in connection with this affair is not all before the public; we do not know, for instance, what were the terms and conditions under which the League leader had agreed to join the proposed Conference. We have to deduce these from his cable to Mr. Attlee as published in the Press on the authority of a Karachi telegram dated November 30, 1946.

> "Your message to Pundit Nehru without disclosing his communication to you delivered to me at 9 tonight (November 29) is a new position after we had accepted the invitation to go to London. We cannot agree to confine only to matters mentioned in your message to Pundit Nehru in the light of what has already taken place which has created an entirely new situation. Unless it is open to us to discuss the whole situation, it will be no use my going to London. Please wire clarifying the position immediately."

Mr. Attlee having got Pundit Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh to agree to go to London found no difficulty in amplifying the purpose of the proposed confabulations in London, and Mr. Jinnah received the following cable on November 30 from the British Prime Minister :

> "I trust that you will come to London. Your refusal must be based on the misunderstanding of my telegram to Nehru. There is nothing in it to prejudice full consideration of all points of view."

British Government's endorsement of Muslim League duplicity in entering the Interim Government

The League leader appeared to be satisfied and wired thanks for "clarification and assurance." But what he got in consequence of the London visit was far more important and far-reaching. The endorsement by the British Government of his contention that "Grouping" was "compulsory" at the first instance was really an endorsement by them of the false pretence by which the Muslim League had been allowed to enter the Interim Government. On October 4, 1946, Lord Wavell had written to Mr. Jinnah that the entry of Muslim League nominees was conditional on the Muslim League rescinding its resolution passed on July 29, 1946, withdrawing co-operation with the Constituent Assembly as sketched in the May 16 statement. But Mr. Jinnah simply ignored this hint ; he was allowed to ignore it thus, and the British Government always punctilious when a point can be scored by insisting on the observance of understandings, implicit or explicit, turned the blind eye on this duplicity of Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and his organization. By this encouragement, Mr. Attlee's Government became a partner in guilt of all the gangsterism that disrupted human relations in India and laid waste fertile areas in the Punjab. The publicist is not required to pass judgment on whether or not it was possible for Lord Wavell with the full support of the Attlee Government to ask the Muslim League nominees to quit the Interim Government as soon as it was realized that Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was in no mood to sincerely co-operate in the Interim Government or help construct in and through the Constituent Assembly the constitution of the future governance of India. That he did not do so was all too plain, and the Muslim League nominees in the Interim Government were allowed to sabotage it from within, to demoralize the whole of officialdom in India. The act of weakness or malignity on the part of Lord Wavell has brought indescribable misery on millions of men, women and children. We cannot believe that the British Government had no purpose in tolerating and encouraging the Muslim League in its "fifth column" activities from inside the Interim Government. This purpose could not be for the good of India. But this policy has not worked towards strengthening Britain's vested interests established during two hundred years in this country. The folly of it became a demonstrable ignominy. Its failure demanded a victim and Lord Wavell was it when he was recalled, or dismissed, so to say, from his high post in India as Viceroy of his king and Governor-General of the country. But, as we have said above, in November-December, 1946, his tactics was on trial as the last desperate throw of the upholders of a system that had been living on Indian dis-unity, and that thought that the Muslim League could be used to postpone the day of its liquidation.

But this policy did not succeed. On December 6, 1946, it did its worst to discredit the work of the Constituent Assembly by declaring that

> "Should the constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government could not, of course, contemplate—as the Congress has stated they would not contemplate—forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country."

Lord Wavell's false assurance of June 16, 1946

This declaration exposed for all times the hypocrisy of British professions about concern for "unwilling parts" of India revolting against the prospect of subjection to a constitution forced on them against their will. It also proved how false was the assurance that Lord Wavell had sent in his letter dated 15th of June, 1946, to Moulana Azad, President of the Congress that "the statement of 16th May *does not make grouping compulsory*," (*Italics ours*). From the first Assam and the

North-West Frontier Provinces protested against their being put under the *Sections* to which they had been put under the Cabinet Delegation's Plan. And for about six months the Congress had been maintaining its opposition to such "*Grouping*" on behalf of these "unwilling parts." The British Government and the Muslim League had been on the other hand treading on the principle of "self-determination" for reasons that have never been explained. And during the debate that was held in the House of Commons (December 12-13, 1946), the spokesman of the Government had not a word to say in support of this outrage on the principle, the basic principle of freedom. Sir Stafford Cripps talked on every conceivable subject in the Indian situation, but he had no word to say why Assam, for instance, should be "grouped" with Bengal. His Government and the Muslim League were thus confronted by the smallest of Indian Provinces with an opposition at the altar of which the whole structure of May 16, 1946, appeared destined to be wrecked. And they tried to get over this difficulty by a fluke, by an interpretation that contradicted the expressed and clear words of the Governor-General, words already quoted above. Though Sir Stafford Cripps avoided the subject, there was Sir John Anderson, an ex-Governor of Bengal, who brought it into focus in course of his speech on the occasion. He was a member of the party in British public life which accepted Mr, Winston Churchill as leader; his knowledge of Indian conditions did not incline him to flirt with the idea of partition as a desirable way out of the impasse. He was at the same time aware that such a possibility existed, that the British Government may have "to hand over authority not to the Central Government representing the whole of India but to some other authority, however constituted I do not know." It appeared from his speech that he was vaguely anxious. But what he said about "partition" and "grouping" was positively constructive; and we quote it below, though his ideas did not have weight with his own party or with the British Government.

"I personally, from such knowledge as I have of the Indian situation and affairs, would not regard partition in any form as intrinsically attractive. I agree in that respect with the comments of the Cabinet Mission. I can perfectly understand that partition in some form might commend itself to sections of Indian opinion as preferable to something else which they might regard as still worse. But there were very great practical difficulties. The economic situation under any partition scheme in India must present many difficult features and there were also special considerations affecting particular areas.

"The north-west frontier seems to be comparatively simple because you have the N. W. F. Province, you have Sind and British Baluchistan. But the Punjab presents features which are deserving of special consideration under any plan, and I should very greatly hope that some way would be found, however the situation may ultimately shape itself, of keeping together the communities in the Punjab—Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. I am glad to learn from something said the other day that responsible leaders of the Muslims have expressed themselves as sympathizing to that conception of partition which presents in my view the most formidable difficulty.

"Not only in Assam, an area in which there is not a Muslim majority although it is closely linked ethnologically and economically with Eastern Bengal, but Bengsl in the west contains a community which is predominantly Hindu and the great city of Calcutta, which is almost the only effective outlet for the products of Bengal, is, I think, 75% Hindu. I think that arguments that could be advanced on one or the other side in regard to Calcutta in relation to the partition of India present very formidable difficulties indeed."

Mr. Churchill's dark and broad hints of blood-shed

Thus we see that, by the time the events of which we have been discussing here, British politicians appeared to have accepted the logic of the desperate remedy looming behind the demand of the Muslim League for a separate State of their own imagination. Sir John Anderson's speech was typical of this attitude of their anxious helplessness. His party leader, Mr. Winston Churchill, gloated over the prospect in India, over Hindu and Muslim cutting one another's throat. A few samples of purple patches from his speech may not be uninteresting in view of the proven fact that the British bureaucracy in India and the class from which they were generally recruited in Britain were not innocent of creating the conditions that produced these "killings." Mr. Churchill's speech was evidence of such encouragement of the gangsterism that the Muslim League had been allowed to introduce into the public life of India. He took special pains to disavow responsibility for the course of events taking shape in our country, lest they be "held accountable" for these as distinguished from the Labour Government. And he presaged things that would happen in India.

> "........ all facts and omens point to the revival, in acute and violent forms, of the internal hatreds and quarrels which have long remained dormant under the mild incompetence of liberal British control. ... .As I warned the House in 1931, if we were to wash our hands of responsibility, a fierce civil war would immediately break out, but this warning, like others, fell on deaf ears............"
>
> "........the cardinal error of the British Government when on August 12 (1946) they invited one single Indian party, the Congress, to nominate all the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, thereby precipitating strife and massacres over a wide region unparalleled in India since the Indian Mutiny of 1857.........
>
> "........This is only a foretaste of what may well come in the future.. .. .. This frightful slaughter in wide regions had in the main fallen upon the Muslim minorities.................. ...."
>
> "........disputes and deadlocks were not the issues at stake. They were only symbols of the passion and hatred of thousands of years. The unity of India was a superficial appearance imposed there by long generations of British rule, and it would pass away for long periods of time once the Imperial element of guidance from outside was withdrawn."

Many members challenged Mr. Churchill and his sentiments

Members were there, Labourites and Conservatives, who dissociated themselves from the purpose and the sentiments of the leader of the Opposition. Colonel Hamilton (Lab), four generations of whose family had served in India, twitted Mr. Churchill with continuing to see "India in a state similar to what it was when he was a young subaltern there ;" he did not like to recognize that the people of India "had been given the feeling that the one thing they wanted was independence under a government of their own." Sir Stanley Reed, for years editor of the Bombay *Times of India*, wished that Mr. Churchill had given "some constructive alternative to the Government's programme." Mr. Thomas Reid (Lab.) regarded Mr. Churchill's speech "as tantamount to an incitement to "the minorities to continue to block the way to Self-Government." Mr. Silverton (Lab.) thought that if "the Cabinet Mission had erred, it was more towards the side of the Muslims rather than the Congress." Mr. Hugh Molson (C)—one of the Tory Reform Group—hoped that the Government would not allow the "end of British rule in India to be followed by an enforcement by British troops of the rule of one community over another." Mr. Gallachar (Communist) suggested that the British should withdraw, and then it will be found that the Indians are well able to "sort things out for themselves." Major Wyatt (Lab) who had accompanied Sir Stafford Cripps to India as Personal Assistant said that Mr. Churchill's speech was "a deliberate attempt to suggest to the Muslim League that it was no good relying on the Cabinet Mission's plan because the odds were against them from the start." Major Beamish (C) wondered "whether it would be useful to refer the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress to the Federal Court because he found it difficult to believe that the former would accept the decision if it differed from their present opinion." Mr. Nicholson (C) said that "Britain must hand over India in running order" and demanded that "immediate steps should be taken to strengthen the administration." This sampling of opinions left the impression on the mind, that even those who were confirmed enemies of India's freedom had no constructive suggestion to make, that they were not sure that it would be possible to re-assert the old regime, from Britain's "dissipated resources," as Mr. Churchill had suggested, "by any apparatus of British-controlled Government." The debate showed the Labour Government of Britain trying to be apologetic of the mess to which they had reduced India, always eager to assure that sleeping dogs are best left undistubrbed, always hoping for the best. From this mood no positive action could emerge except postponing decision, the nearest approach to which was suggested by Major Wyatt, a *confidante* of Sir Stafford Cripps, in course of this particular debate,

> "We must say clearly and unequivocally to India that on a certain fixed date, we are going to leave India with our troops, with our officials, and with any British resident who wish to go with us. We must announce that date before the administrative machinery has completely crumpled in our hands. That date, I would suggest, should certainly not be more than 12 months ahead. We cannot allow British troops to be dragged into either side in a civil war."

The Constituent Assembly—the dignity of the occasion and its responsibility

This announcement came a little over two months later on February 20, 1947, when the British Government declared that they would withdraw their power from India by June, 1948, at the latest. But in December, 1946, they could only wobble. They were anxious that the Constituent Assembly, scheduled to meet on December 9, should not meet but wait on the pleasure or whim of the Muslim League, but they dared not postpone it. Mr. Churchill in his speech had questioned whether or not the meetings at New Delhi being held on and since December 9 were that of "a valid Constituent Assembly." Mr. Alexander, a member of the Cabinet Delegation, who concluded the debate on behalf of the Government refused to be drawn out further into the matter. Perhaps, he was satisfied with the December 6 announcement clearing the Government's position that they could not present to the British Parliament any Bill embodying the conclusions of the Constituent Assembly holding its sittings at New Delhi during the days when this debate was held. The leaders of the Muslim League; represented in the Constituent Assembly, refused to co-operate in its work, but other elements in the country represented by the Congress and other organizations were there in full strength, resolved to frame a constitution that would be "reared for immortality, if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title" as Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, temporary Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, very appositely quoted from Story, the greatest American jurist, in concluding his book entitled—"*Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States.* Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha's address rose to the dignity of the occasion, and he called on his fellow-members to realize it, to realize their responsibilities as the architects of their country's future. The world recognised that a new epoch was being opened before India, and the United States, China and Australia sent "good wishes" for the success of its work. The British Government, however, failed to take notice of this historic event, a strange attitude to adopt; it reflected the grudging spirit that characterized all their concession to Indian sentiment and their responses to India's demands for freedom. The Governor-General, Lord Wavell, was deliberately absent from New Delhi. This silence, this absence and their significance were not lost on any body in India : these were heightened by what representatives of the U. S. A, of China, and of Australia's Governments said on the occasion. Dr, Sinha read the following messages.

"With the approach of December 9, I extend to you as Provisional Chairman of the Constituent Assembly and through you to the Indian people the sincere good wishes of the United States Government and of the people of the United States for a successful conclusion of the great task you are about to undertake. India has a great contribution to make to the peace, stability and cultural advancement of mankind, and your deliberation will be watched with deep interest by freedom-loving people throughout the entire world."—*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, U.S.A.*

"On the auspicious occasion of the opening of the Indian Constituent Assembly I have the honour to extend to you in the name of the National Government of China, my heartiest congratulations. I sincerely hope that your great Assembly will succeed in laying the solid foundations for a democratic and prosperous India".—*Foreign Minister, China.*

"The Australian Government greets the opening of the Constituent Assembly as an outward sign of a new era for India and offers the delegates of the Constituent Assembly its best wishes for success in their task."—*Foreign Minister, Commonwealth of Australia.*

The Constituent Assembly at work

We have seen how the British Government frowned upon the inauguration of the Constituent Assembly ; we have seen how the Muslim League found courage in this frowning to decide to keep absent its representatives from the Constituent Assembly and persist in doing this even after enough time had been given them to re-consider their decision. Both these attitudes were responsible for creating a feeling of indecisiveness in the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. On the second day (December 10. 1946), Acharya Kripalani moved a resolution to set up a Committee of 15 members to frame "rules of procedure and other matters." The resolution, as circulated, contained the words that the Committee should report on the "rules of procedure of the Assembly, Sections, and Committees." But when he moved the resolution, he dropped the words—"Sections and Committees"—because he felt these to be "superfluous," as the "Sections and Committees" were, by implication, parts of the Constituent Assembly. But there were members who refused to accept this plea ; they felt that the omission of these words might be taken advantage of by the recalcitrants of the Muslim League if they chose to join later the Constituent Assembly when they might contend that the rules and procedure framed did not bind the "Sections and Committees" as these had been framed for the Assembly only. Therefore an amendment was moved by a Bengal member, Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee and supported by another Bengal member, Dr. Shyma Prasad Mukherjee insisting on "specifically" mentioning "Sections and Committees" in the resolution. A debate ensued, and it revealed that behind the back of this innocent omission, certain "fundamental issues" (Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's words) were involved, and though he had helped to frame the resolution, he advised the retention of these words. Dr. Jayakar, however, pressed for their omission on the plea that there was "an important group who are not present here but who are watching these proceedings with a very jealous and suspicious eye, to discover whether you are taking anything out of their hands." As they are vitally interested in Sections B. and C. of the Cabinet Mission's plan they might feel that the Constituent Assembly was taking advantage of their absence and usurping powers over these Sections where by their number they hoped to have the decided say. Dr. Banerjee's amendment was accepted. But the debate on it exposed the trend of mind of a large section of the members of the Constituent Assembly.

The "Objectives" Resolution—India's hopes and aspirations

The same feeling prevailed when the "Objectives" Resolution, sponsored by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on December 13, was being discussed. The first and main clause of the resolution was worded as follows:

> "Wherein this Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an independent, sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future Government a constitution, the territories that now comprise (the Dominion of) India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside (the Dominion of) India and the States, as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the independent, sovereign India shall be a Union of them all;

In discussing this resolution, the same note of caution was struck by Dr. Jayakar and Dr. Ambedkar. They wanted to wait till the arrival of Muslim League representatives and those of the States. The use of the word "Republic" might scare the Princely Order away; the Muslim League might be in a huff because such a resolution had been passed in their absence. This appeal for procrastination appears to have met with success, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the permanent President of the Constituent Assembly, announced on December 23, (1946) that future discussions on the "Objectives" Resolution had been postponed to the January session of the Assembly. Thus did the year 1946 end with a note of interrogation to all that had happened since the Cabinet Delegation's arrival in India in March, 1946. The stalemate reached was the product of British encouragement of Muslim League intransigence which could have been controlled if the Muslim League representatives had been asked by Lord Wavell to quit the Interim Government if they did not join the Constituent Assembly. This betrayal set loose all the forces of anarchy over the country by the Muslim League with consequences that the world has watched with horror.—*(Specially contributed by Shri Suresh Chandra Deb.)*

Proceedings of

The Indian National Congress

The All India Muslim League

The Calcutta, Noakhali & Bihar riots

The Interim Government at the Centre

AND

The Constituent Assembly Proceedings

The All India Hindu Mahasabha

AND

Other Annual Conferences

July—December 1946

The Indian National Congress

Proceedings of the Working Committee

Delhi—April 12—18, April 25—30, May 17—24 and June 9—26, 1946

Meetings of the Working Committee were held at Delhi from April 12 to 18, April 25 to 30, May 17 to 24 and June 9 to 26, 1946. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presided. The members present were Shris Sarojini Naidu, Jawharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Shankar Rao Deo, Govinda Ballabh Pant, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Asafali, Harekrishna Mahatab, and J. B. Kripalani. Shri Sarat Chandra Bose was present by special invitation. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Harekrishna Mahatab were absent from some sittings of the Committee. Gandhiji was generally present at the afternoon sittings of the Committee.

These meetings were devoted primarily to negotiations with the Cabinet Mission with regard to the setting up of the Constituent Assembly to frame the Constitution of a free and independent India and the establishment of a provisional national government. The Working Committee considered a few other matters also at these meetings and passed resolutions on them. The resolutions are given here.

(1) CONDOLENCE : SHRI BHULABHAI DESAI

The Working Committee places on record its profound sense of grief and loss at the death of Shri Bhulabhai Desai who served the country at great sacrifice and with great ability and devotion for a number of years as a member of the Working Committee and in various other capacities, particularly as leader of the Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly and as leading counsel for the defence in the I. N. A. trials, and offers to Shri Dhirajlal Desai and Shrimati Madhuri Desai its sincerest condolences and sympathy.

(2) MINISTERS AND CONGRESS EXECUTIVES

In March 1937, on the occasion of the formation of the Congress Government in the provinces, the Working Committee decided that the Congress Ministers should continue to remain members of the Congress Executive Committees though they could retain membership of the general bodies such as the All India Congress Committee and the Provincial Congress Committees.

In view of the many developments that have taken place since then, it is desirable to consider this question afresh and the Committee will do so in the near future. Meanwhile, the resolution of March, 1937 shall be considered suspended.

(3) PUBLIC FUNDS

A question has been referred to the Working Committee as to whether a public worker or leader is justified in receiving for his own use monies collected from the public and presented to him in the form of a purse at a public function.

The Working Committee having fully considered the question in all its bearings is firmly of opinion that such purses should only be utilised for public purposes and not for the personal use of the recipient of the purses. Any personal use of the public monies presented to our publicmen is bound to lead to corruption in public life. The Committee is further of opinion that public men should maintain accounts of the monies given to them by the public.

(4) INDONESIA'S OFFER OF RICE TO INDIA

The Working Committee desire to convey their gratitude to Dr. Shariar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, and to the Government of the people of Indonesia for their generous offer to supply half a million tons of rice to India. That offer, made at a time when Indonesia herself has to face serious problems and difficulties, demonstrates the close and friendly bonds that unite Indonesia and India. The Committee send their greetings to the people of Indonesia and express their solidarity with them in the cause of freedom. They look forward to close cooperation in the future between an independent India and an independent Indonesia.

(5) SOUTH AFRICA

The Congress Working Committee note with satisfaction not unmixed with concern that Indians in South Africa have started the campaign of Civil Disobedience as a protest against the recently passed legislation by the South African Parliament imposing disabilities upon them. The Congress Working Committee are of opinion that the campaign carries in it the seeds of success in so far as the honour of Indians is concerned as distinguished from the loss of material prospects. The Committee expect that having begun the struggle the Resisters will carry it to an end without yielding. The Committee assure the Resisters of full sympathy in their brave struggle and hope that those who are not themselves Resisters will not on any account succumb to the temptations contained in the legislation itself and such small concessions that may be held out by the Union Government. The inferior status assigned to the Indians by the Act can be wiped out only by its complete abrogation. The Committee hope and expect that while the Government of India remains in the British power, His Excellency the Viceroy will see to using his influence openly on behalf of the brave Resisters and thus secure for them the sympathy of the world in the noble struggle for the rights of man.

Proceedings of the Working Committee

Bombay—July 5 to 8, 1946

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Bombay from July 5 to 8, 1946. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presided. The members present were Shris Sarojini Naidu, Jawharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Pattabhi Sitarammayya, Shankerrao Deo, Govind Ballabh Pant, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Harekrishna Mahatab and J. B. Kripalani. Gandhiji was present at the afternoon sittings of the Committee.

The Committee prepared the following draft resolutions for the A. I. C. C.

(1) Resolved that the resolution of the Working Committee dated June 26 be and is hereby ratified.

(2) SOUTH AFRICA

(*See A. I. C. C. Proceedings*)

(3) CEYLON

It passed the following resolution on Ceylon :—

The Working Committee have viewed with anxious concern the development of the situation in Ceylon relating to the rights and security and welfare of Indians in Ceylon and more particularly of labour in the rubber and tea estates, resulting in a general hartal of Indian workers which has already lasted over three weeks. The Committee sympathise with the demands of Indians for fair treatment and rights of citizenship and franchise and deeply regret that any such conflict should arise between the Indian residents of Ceylon and the Ceylonese Government. Ceylon and India are and must inevitably be closely associated in the future and it should be the desire and endeavour of all concerned to find a way for settling all disputes in a just and equitable manner honourable to India and conducive to enlarging the freedom of people. The Committee while appreciating the sacrifices of the estate workers in their heroic struggle are of opinion that the present strike, which is essentially political in its motive though it is related to economic problems affecting Indian labour as a whole, should be discontinued, with a view to creating an atmosphere favourable to conciliation, and therefore advise the Ceylon Indian Congress to call it off.

The Committee assure the Ceylon Indian Congress of its full sympathy for the cause of Indians in Ceylon and to that end and for taking necessary steps to obtain redress for their grievances appoints the following Committee for investigation of the matters in dispute.

The Committee will consist of the president (Jawharlal Nehru), Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Shri Aryanayakam and Shri Ramchandran.

EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Working Committee appointed the following Expert Committee for the purpose of preparing material for the Constituent Assembly :

1. Shri Jawharlal Nehru (Chairman). 2. Shri Asaf Ali. 3. Shri K. M. Munshi. (4) Shri Gopalaswami Iyengar. (5) Shri K. T. Shah. (6) Shri D. V. Gadgil (of the Gokhale School of Politics and Economics). 7. Shri Humayun Kabir. 8. Shri K. Santanam (of Delhi).

(The Expert Committee met at Delhi on the 20th July, and subsequent days. It co-opted Shri Krishna Kripalani as a member and convener of the Committee.

KASHMIR

The Committee discussed the situation arising out of the ban of the Kashmir

Government on Pandit Jawharlal Nehru's entry into Kashmir State and the continued detention of Sheikh Abdulla, the president of the Kashmir National Conference. It considered the steps to be taken in connection with both the ban and the detention.

Proceedings of the All India Congress Committee

Bombay—July 6 to 7, 1946

A meeting of the All India Congress Committee was held at Bombay on July 6 and 7 in the Cowasji Jahangir Hall. Two hundred and eighty-six members were present.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting of the A. I. C. C. held at Bombay from September 21 to 23, 1946 were placed by Shri J. B. Kripalani, the General Secretary of the A. I. C. C. before the Committee and confirmed.

LAYING DOWN OF THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President in a brief speech reviewed the course of events ever since he assumed the presidentship of the Congress in the year 1940 at Ramgarh. He formally laid down the presidential office and invited Pandit Nehru to accept the honour and the burdens it carried with it.

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru then took the Presidential Chair.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant paid a warm tribute to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for the splendid manner in which he discharged the heavy responsibilities of Congress Presidentship of six long and eventful years.

The following condolence resolution were moved from the chair and passed.

CONDOLENCE : SHRI BHULABHAI DESAI

The A. I. C. C. places on record its profound sense of grief and loss at the death of Shri Bhulabhai Desai who served the country at great sacrifice and with great ability and devotion for a number of years as a member of the Working Committee and in various other capacities, particularly as leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly and as leading counsel for defence in the I. N. A. trials, and offers to Shri Dhirajlal Desai and Shrimati Madhuri its sincerest condolence and sympathy.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad moved the principal resolution of the session.

The resolution was seconded by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Several amendments were moved to the resolution. They were, however, declared out of order by the President. There was a debate on the resolution in which a large number of speakers participated.

The resolution was put to vote and passed. 204 votes were recorded in favour of the resolution and 5 against it.

The text of the resolution as also that of the Working Committee resolution of June 24 are given here.

Resolved that the resolution of the Working Committee dated June 26th be and is hereby ratified.

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITT, ON JUNE 26, 1946

On May 24th the Working Committee passed a resolution on the statement dated May 16 issued by the British Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy. In this resolution they pointed out some defects in the Statement and gave their own interpretation of certain parts of it.

Since the Committee have been continuously engaged in giving earnest consideration to the proposals made on behalf of the British Government in the Statements of May 16 and June 16 and have considered the correspondence in regard to them between the Congress President and the members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy.

The Committee have examined both these sets of proposals from the point of view of the Congress objective of immediate independence and the opening out of the avenues leading to the rapid advance of the masses, economically and socially, so that their material standards may be raised and poverty, malnutrition, famine and the lack of the necessaries of life may be ended, and all the people of the country may have the freedom and opportunity to grow and develop according to their genius. These proposals fall short of these objectives. Yet the Committee considered them earnestly in all aspects because of their desire to find some way for the peaceful settlement of India's problem and the ending of the conflict between India and England.

The kind of independence Congress has aimed at is the establishment of a united democratic Indian Federation, with a central authority, which would command respect from the nations of the world, maximum provincial autonomy, and equal rights for all men and women in the country. The limitation of the central authority as contained in the proposals, as well as the system of grouping of provinces, weakened the whole structure and was unfair to some provinces such as the N. W. F. Province and the Assam, and to some of the minorities, notably the Sikhs. The Committee disapproved of this. They felt, however, that, taking the proposals as as whole, there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the cultural authority and for fully ensuring the rights of a province to act according to its choice in regard to grouping, and to give protection to such minorities as might otherwise be placed at a disadvantage. Certain other objections were also raised on their behalf, notably the possibility of non-nationals taking any part in the constitution making. It is clear that it would be a breach of both the letter and spirit of the Statement of May 16 if any non-Indian participated in voting or standing for election to the Constituent Assebly.

In the proposals for an Interim Government contained in the Statement of June 16 the defects related to matters of vital concern to the Congress. Some of these have been pointed out in the letter dated June 25, of the Congress President to the Viceroy. The Provisional Government must have power and authority and responsibility and should function in fact, if not in law, as a *de facto* independent Government leading to the full independence to come. The members of such a government can only hold themselves responsible to the people and not to any external authority. In the formation of a provisional or other government Congressmen can never give up the national character of the Congress, or accept an artificial and unjust parity, or agree to the veto of a communal group. The Committee are unable to accept the proposals for the formation of an Interim Government as contained in the Statement of June 16.

The Committee have, however, decided that the Congress should join the proposed Constituent Assembly, with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India.

While the Committee have agreed to Congress participation in the Constituent Assembly, it is in their opinion essential that a representative and responsible Provisional National Government be formed at the earliest possible date. A continuation of authoritarian and unrepresentative government can only add to the suffering of famishing masses and increase discontent. It will also put in jeopardy the work of the Constituent Assembly, which can only function in a free environment.

The Working Committee recommended accordingly to the All India Congress Committee, and for the purpose of considering and ratifying this recommendation they convened an emergent meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay on July 6 and 7, 1946.

Shrimati Sarojini Naidu then moved the following resolution on South Africa. It was seconded by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. The resolution was passed unanimously.

SOUTH AFRICA

This meeting of the A. I. C. C., while it is grieved that it has become imperative for the Indian settlers in South Africa once more to offer Satyagraha in the land of its birth against a law imposing on them a colour bar far more sinister than the one against which they had put up a brave fight between 1907 and 1914, congratulates the handful of Satyagrahis on their brave but equal action against heavy odds.

This meeting is pleased to find that doctors and some other men and women are at the head of the gallant struggle and that among them are represented Parsis, Christians, Muslims and Hindus. This meeting is also pleased to find that a few white men like the Rev. Scott have thrown in their lot with the Satyagrahis.

This meeting condemns the action of some white men in resorting to the barbarous method known as lynch law to terrorise the Satyagrahis into submission to the humiliating legislation. It is worthy of note that a large part of the Indians are born and bred in South Africa to whom India exists only in their imagination. These colonial-born Indians have adopted European manners and customs and English has become like their mother tongue.

This meeting notes with great satisfaction that the Indian resisters are keeping their struggle free from violence in any shape or form conducting it with dignity and without rancour and that they are thus suffering not only for their self-respect but for the honour of India, and by their heroic resistance setting a noble example to all the exploited peoples of the earth.

This meeting assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of India's full support in this unequal struggle and is firmly of opinion that persistence in it is bound to crown their effort with success.

This meeting appeals to H. E. the Viceroy to use all his endeavour and ensure that of the British Government in aid of this struggle and invites the European residents of India to raise their voice in protest against white hooligansim and the anti-Asiatic and anti-colour legislation of South Africa.

Non-Official Resolutions

The A. I. C. C. Office received notice of some non-official resolutions to be moved at the A. I. C. C. meeting. The president explained that the present meeting of the A. I. C. C. was a special meeting convened for the specific purpose of considering the decision of the Working Committee taken on the proposals of the Cabinet delegation in regard to the Constituent Assembly. Besides most of the non-official resolutions were covered by the principal official resolution. The few that remained related to Indian States. On an explanation from the President the members who had given notice of these resolutions agreed to their withdrawal.

Presidential Election

In March 1946, the A. I. C. C. Office issued a time-table for election of delegates, the president of the next annual session of the Congress and representatives from provinces to the A. I. C. C. According to the time-table April 29 was fixed as the last date by which proposals for president should reach the A. I. C. C. Office. The following three names were received for presidentship.

(1) Shri Jawaharlal Nehru,
(2) Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, and
(3) Shri J. B Kripalani.

Two more names, those of Shri Subhash Ch. Bose and Shri Jai Prakash Narain were also received. But in terms of the Congress Constitution, these names could not be entertained. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose was not a primary member of the Congress for the current year and Shri Jai Prakash's name was not found in the list of delegates received from Bihar.

The presidential election was scheduled to take place on May 16. But before this date two candidates for presidential election, Shri Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri J. B. Kripalani informed the A. I. C. C. Office of their intention to withdraw sheir candidature. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru remained the only candidate. Acharya J. B. Kripalani, the General Secretary of the Congress therefore declared Shri Jawaharlal Nehru as the duly elected president of the next session of the Congress.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru issued the following statement announcing the personnel of the new Working Committee, on the 9th. July 1946 :—

New Working Committee

Under Article 20 of the Congress Constitution I nominate the following members of the Working Committee:

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad 2. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel 3. Dr. Rajendra Prasad 4. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan 5. Shri Govind Ballabh Pant 6. Shri C. Rajagopalachari 7. Shri Rafi Ahmad Kidwai 8. Shri Sarat Chandra Bose 9. Shri Kamala Devi (Karnatak) 10. Rao Sahab Patwardhan (Maharashtra) 11. Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad (Assam) 12. Sardar Pratap Singh (Punjab) 13. Shari Mridula Sarabhai 14. Dr, Balkrishna V. Keskar.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will continue to act as Treasurer and Shri Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. Balkrishna Keskar will be the General Secretaries.

Dr. Keskar is not at present a member of the A. I. C. C. But it is expected that he will find a place in the A. I. C. C. in the near future.

I have found considerable difficulty in selecting names for the Working Committee, because, I was loath to keep out the names of many old and valued colleagues who had shouldered the burden of the Congress work in the Committee and the A. I. C. C. office for so long. At the same time it was highly desirable for new elements to be taken into the Committee. I consulted my colleagues and notably Gandhiji in this matter and have been largely guided by their advice, though of course the responsibility for the final selection must remain with me. We felt that our old colleagues who have long been considered as the elder statesmen of the Congress should in any event be there to give us the benefit of their advice and experience. They should normally be invited to our Working Committee sessions. I should like also to invite as frequently as possible leading representatives of the Harijans, the Indian Christians and some of the smaller minorities to assist us in our labours. The work before us is not only heavy but of the most vital importance and we want the utmost co-operation from all Congressmen and from the country at large. It will be my endeavour to seek this co-operation.

To Shri J. B. Kripalani, who has shouldered the burden of the Congress secretaryship for many years, I should especially like to express my sense of gratitude and appreciation. I have every confidence that he will allow us to profit by his long experience of running the A. I. C. C. office.

Shri Sarojini Naidu, though not now formally a member of the Working Committee, is as much part of us and our work as any one can be and she remains for us the pillar of strength and hope that she has always been. It is difficult to imagine a Working Committee without her. But in effect the Committee will not be without her help and co operation.

To all old members and new I send my greetings at the outset of these new changes. May we all prove true and faithful servants of India and our great National organisation in the trying days ahead. JAI HIND.

Statements by the Congress President

During the last fortnight there have been strikes and other happenings which had to receive the consideration of the Congress President. We give below the text of some of the statements issued by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :—

(i)—POSTAL STRIKE

Many people had heard of the coming of the postal strike, but this morning all India suddenly became conscious of it, and if no specific step is taken it is likely to be actually conscious of it for a considerable time. A postal strike is always a calamity to the public and is to be avoided as far as possible. In labour disputes generally and more particularly in regard to essential services, a civilised government and society provide other methods of settlement than that of the strike. Unfortunately our government and social structure function differently.

I am not in a position to express an opinion about the detailed demands of the postal employees although during the last five or six months the matter has come up before me on several occasions. *Prima facie* the lower paid postal employees are badly paid and live a hard life. Their service is known for its honesty, integrity and hard work and inevitably one's sympathy goes to them.

One fact which is significant is that the Postal Enquiry Committee which functioned a year and a half ago under the chairmanship of Mr. Krishna Prasad, the present Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, presented a report in April 1945 which was suppressed. Why was it suppressed by Government although from all accounts it was a unanimous report? This suppression does not bring credit to the Government nor does it incline one to its present argument in this dispute.

As I have said, I am unable to express any specific opinion about the demands, but I am quite convinced that this matter as a whole ought to have been referred to adjudication or arbitration. One very small aspect of the question relating to interim relief to men on new scales of pay was referred to adjudication and the award is expected soon. But this does not cover the main points at issue. I would strongly urge both the Government and the All India Postal Union to accept a full adjudication or arbitration of the entire dispute. There can be a time limit fixed for this and any recommendations or decisions may be made subject to the future findings of the Pay Commission which had begun considering the whole subject of official salaries etc. If this step is taken it will be fair and honourable to all concerned and will bring relief to the public also who are suffering from this strike.

These same considerations apply to the telegraph employees who have given notice of a strike. I would urge that their case also should be referred to adjudication or arbitration.

July 11

(ii)—GOA

In the midst of formidable problems which face India, little Goa offers its own problems. But because Goa is an enclave on the west coast of India, we may not ignore or forget it. Wherever human liberty and human suffering are involved, the problem is not a little one. Wherever people struggle for freedom and against repression they enact a drama which is always full of vital interest to lovers of liberty all over the world. Goa also raises international issues which are bound to come to the forefront in the near future.

Eighteen years ago a Congress Committee was started in Goa by Mr. Tristo

Braganca Cunha and for some years he was a member of the All India Congress Committee. Later under the constitution of the Congress such foreign committees were not affiliated. I remember those days of association with Mr. Cunha.

Now he lies in some Portuguese prison waiting to be tried by a court martial, although no martial law has been proclaimed in Goa and Mr. Cunha is no soldier.

In Goa for a vast span of years there has been no shadow of civil liberty. No meetings can be held and nothing can be printed not even a wedding card without police permission. A month ago Dr. Lohia broke this ban and addressed a meeting.

Since then people of Goa have woke up from their slumber and have repeatedly tried to hold peaceful meetings. The Portuguese struggle is one for civil liberties. I should like to tell the people of Goa how we all sympathise with them in this struggle and how we are following it with anxious interest. For us Goa is as much a part of India as any other part and the freedom of India inevitably includes the freedom of the people of Goa. Goa cannot be separated from India, so any struggle for freedom there becomes part of our own struggle. But whatever struggle there may be it is wholly unbecoming for the Portuguese authorities in Goa to use the methods they adopted. In particular the trial by martial law of a well known citizen and public worker of Goa for his standing for civil liberties is something that is peculiarly bad. I understand he has not even been given sufficient time to prepare for his defence.

There are plenty of Goans in Bombay and I hope that not only they but the Congress organisation in Bombay will give such assistance as they can in helping by way of defence or otherwise those who are carrying on the struggle in Goa. To the people of Goa I send my greetings and good wishes.

(iii)—INDIA'S GOOD WISHES TO PHILIPPINES

Freedom and independence are the battle cries of every Asian country and people. Every advance of freedom, therefore, in any country of Asia is welcome. The independence of the Philippines has been inaugurated on an auspicious day, July 4, famous in the annals of freedom, when the American colonies started their career of independence which was to lead them to new heights in prosperity and power undreamt of in previous ages.

We send our greetings to the people of the Philippines on this opening of a new chapter in their history. We hope that this really signifies independence for this word has become rather hackneyed and outworn and has been made to mean many things. Some countries that are called independent are far from free and are under the economic or military domination of some great power. Some so-called independent countries carry on with what might be termed 'Puppet regimes' and are in a way client countries of some great power. We hope that is not so with the Philippines.

With India in the past the people of the Philippines as of all other countries of South-East Asia, have had closest contact. Not only history demands that, but present interests. Inevitably, whatever the future of the world organisation is, India and the countries of South-East Asia must hang together and work together. This is necessary from the point of view of defence and strategy, for trade and commerce, and in cultural association. So, on this welcome and auspicious occasion we send our good wishes for the people of the Philippines.

Proceeding of the Working Committee

Wardha—August 8—13, 1946

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Wardha from August 8—13, 1946. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided. The members present were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, Govind Ballabh Pant, Sarat Chandra Bose, Rajagopalachari, Kamaladevi, P. H. Patwardhan. Fakhruddin Ahmed, Sardar Pratap Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar. Sarojini Naidu, J. B. Kripalani, Shankar Rao Deo, Pattabhi Sitarammayya, Profulla Chandra Ghosh and Jagjivan Ram were present by special invitation. Gandhiji was present at the afternoon sittings of the Committee.

The following general resolutions were passed :

(1) Next Session of the Congress
(2) Congress and Constituent Assembly
(3) Sikhs and Constituent Assembly
(4) Parliamentary Sub-Committee
(5) Goa

(6) East Africa
(7) Indian Labour in Malaya
(8) Hyderabad
(9) Congress Labour Policy
(10) Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh
(11) Congress Committees and Praja Mandals in States.

NEXT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS

Resolved that the next full Session of the Congress be held about the middle of November, 1946. The invitation of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant to hold the Session in U. P. was accepted. The exact venue of the Session will be announced later.

The Working Committee regret to note that the Council of the All India Muslim League, reversing their previous decision, have decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly. In this period of rapid transition from dependence on a foreign power to full independence, when vast and intricate political and economic problems have to be faced and solved, the largest measure of co-operation among the people of India and their representatives is called for, so that the change-over should be smooth and to the advantage of all concerned. The Committee realise that there are differences in the outlook and objectives of the Congress and the Muslim League. Nevertheless, in the larger interests of the country as a whole and of the freedom of the people of India, the Committee appeal for the co-operation of all those who seek the freedom and the good of the country, in the hope that co-operation in common task may lead to the solution of many of India's problems.

The Committee have noted that criticisms have been advanced on behalf of the Muslim League to the effect that the Congress acceptance of the proposals contained in the Statement of May 16th was conditional. The Committee wish to make it clear that while they did not approve of all the proposals contained in this statement, they accepted the scheme in its entirety. They interpreted it so as to resolve the inconsistencies contained in it and fill the omissions in accordance with the principles laid down in that Statement. They hold that provincial autonomy is a basic provision and each province has the right to decide whether to form or join a group or not. Questions of interpretation will be decided by the procedure laid down in the Statement itself, and the Congress will advise its representatives in the Constituent Assembly to function accordingly.

The Committee have emphasized the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly, that is its right to function and draw up a constitution for India without the interference of any external power or authority. But the Assembly will naturally function within the internal limitations which are inherent in its task, and therefore seek the largest measure of co-operation in drawing up a constitution of free India allowing the greatest measure of freedom and protection for all just claims and interests. It was with this object and with the desire to function in the Constituent Assembly and make it a success, that the Working Committee passed their resolution on June 26, 1946, which was subsequently ratified by the all India Congress Committee on July 7, 1946. By that decision of the A. I. C. C. they must stand, and they propose to proceed accordingly with their work in the Constituent Assembly.

The Committee hope that the Muslim League and all others concerned, in the wider interests of the nation as well as of their own, will join in this great task.

THE SIKHS AND THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Working Committee have learnt with regret of the decision of the Sikhs not to seek election to the Constituent Assembly. The Committee are aware that injustice has been done to the Sikhs and they have drawn the attention of the Cabinet Delegation to it. They are however strongly of opinion that the Sikhs would serve their cause and the cause of the country's freedom better by participation in the Constituent Assembly than by keeping out of it. The Committee therefore appeal to the Sikhs to reconsider their decision and express their willingness to take part in the Constituent Assembly. The Working Committee assure the Sikhs that the Congress will give them all possible support in removing their legitimate grievances and in securing adequate safeguards for the protection of their just interests in the Punjab.

PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Resolved that a Parliamentary Sub-Committee consisting of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad be appointed to keep in close and constant touch with the Congress parties in legislatures, to advise them in all activities and to take necessary action in case of emergency.

GOA

Recent events in Goa have compelled attention and brought to light the extremely backward state of these Portuguese possessions. Economically the people of these possessions have been reduced to poverty and degradation ; politically they have practically no rights and even the most elementary civil liberties are denied. The fascist authoritarian administration of Portugal functions in a peculiarly oppressive way in this very small colony, which once was rich and prosperous and a centre of commercial activity and now is deserted, with its people migrating elsewhere in search of a living.

The nature of the present administration of Goa is exhibited by the sentence of eight years' transportation to Africa passed by Court Martial on Mr. Tristao Braganca Cunha, a well-known citizen and public worker of Goa, for the offence of challenging the ban on public meetings. The present movement in Goa appears to be entirely confined to the peaceful assertion of the right to civil liberties and yet it is met by fierce repression to the Portuguese possessions in Africa.

In justification of this policy of the administration, the Portuguese Governor of Goa has issued a statement which is unbecoming in tone and objectionable in regard to its pretensions. Goa has always been and must inevitably continue to be a part of India. It must share in the freedom of the Indian people. What its future position and status will be in a free India, can only be determined in consultation with the people of Goa and not by any external authority.

The Working Committee have noted the contrast between the attitude of the Portuguese in regard to their Indian possessions and the policy enunciated by the Governor of French India, who stated recently that the people of French India are free to decide their own future and may, if they so choose, join an Indian Union. The Committee appreciate this statesman-like expression of policy on behalf of the French Government.

The Working Committee understand that Portugal has applied for membership of the United Nations Organization. The Committee are opinion that it will be improper and against the basic principles of UNO to admit to their membership a country which has an authoritarian and reactionary administration and denies democracy and civil liberties and which, in its colonies carries on the worst form of colonial rule. They trust, therefore, that Portugal will not be admitted to the UNO.

The Committee send their greetings to the people of Goa and express their struggle for the establishment of civil liberties.

EAST AFRICA

The Working Committee having heard Mr. R. B. Pandya on behalf of the East African Indian National Congress, and Mr. Harichand M. Shah on behalf of the Africa and Overseas Merchants' Chamber, on the attempts made by the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika to introduce anti-Indian immigration legislation express their deep concern over the situation developing in those territories.

In view of the assurances given by the East African Governments to the Government of India that Defence Regulations restricting immigration were a temporary measure to meet certain wartime needs, the Working Committee take a very grave view of the refusal of these Governments to these regulations as promised, and ask the Government of India to take appropriate measures to secure without delay the fulfilment of these promises by the Governments concerned.

The Working Committee can see no justification whatsoever for the introduction of the immigration restriction bill in the present state of the political, economic and social development of the East African territories and their inhabitants, and is emphatically of opinion that the British Colonial Office should restore pre-war conditions as regards immigration by withdrawing war-time regulations and should prevent the anti-Indian policy of the European inhabitants from being given sanction and legislative shape.

Indians were in East Africa long before any Britisher set foot on that soil and they could point to as many generations of useful industry on the coast as well as inland as the white settlers could count years of residence. In consideration of this history of colonisation and opening up of East African territories, Mr. Winston Churchill came to the conclusion and wrote in his book many years ago that no Government with a scrap of respect for honest dealing between man and man could introduce a policy of keeping Indians out of East Africa.

The Committee are also of opinion that any steps to bring about the economic union of the three East African territories should include the provision for equal representation as proposed by the British Colonial Office and should not yield to the pressure of the European population to abandon this provision.

The Committee reiterate the protest against the reservation of the best part of the land, the Highlands, for white men, excluding even the Africans to whom the soil of their own country must belong.

The Committee wish all success to the Delegation going to East Africa under the leadership of Rajah Sir Maharaj Singh to study the situation on the spot and to impress upon the East African Governments the advisability of dropping their proposed anti-Indian immigration legislation which is now being precipitated, in view of developments in India, and hope that they will be able to convince the East African Governments that any anti-Indian policy encouraged in East Africa will be an intolerable addition to the insults and provocations which are aimed at India and which undoubtedly serve to postpone the day of realisation of true world peace and security.

The Working Committee have noted with pleasure that cordial relations prevail between the Africans and Indians, and trust that there will be continued co-operation between the two for their mutual advancement, and for the removal of the disabilities which are sought to be imposed upon both of them by the white settlers.

INDIAN LABOUR IN MALAYA

The Working Committee have seen reports to the effect that proposals are being discussed for the resumption of large-scale emigration of labour from South India to Malaya for the purpose of increasing rubber production. The Committee are strongly opposed to any emigration of Indian labour to foreign countries, in view of the treatment accorded to it there and the consequent problems it raises. It is surprising that any proposal should be made for additional labour to be sent to Malaya when the immediate problem there is how to bring back to India the thousands of Indian workers and their dependents who have suffered greatly during past years and many of whom are in a destitute condition. The Committee are of opinion that it should be clearly stated by Government that no Indian labour will be sent to Malaya or else-where.

HYDERABAD

The Working Committee have considered the proposed constitutional changes which have been recently announced in Hyderabad State. These proposals are wrongly conceived, limited in scope and full of checks and reservations, and are apparently intended not to introduce any measure of freedom for the people but to preserve privilege and vested interest and perpetuate the feudal conditions that prevail in the State. They would have been objectionable at any time, as the principles on which they are based are opposed to all cannons of justice and democracy. At a time when India is on the eve of independence, they are wholly out of keeping with the minimum demands of the situation and cannot be fitted in with any constitution for a free India which may be evolved in the near future. The Committee regret that the premier State of India should be backward politically, economically and in regard to essential civil liberties, and averse to progressive change when all the States in India are expected to advance rapidly towards responsible government as autonomous parts of independent India. The Committee are therefore of opinion that these proposed changes will, if given effect to, retard progress towards freedom, and the new 'Ain' should be withdrawn and replaced by a constitution drawn up with the consent and approval of the people.

The Committee approve of the decision of the Executive of the State Congress to reject this new scheme and not to participate in it.

LABOUR POLICY

The Working Committee view with deep concern the intense and widespread labour unrest which has in recent months involved numerous industries and services in the country in large-scale and prolonged stoppages, entailing heavy material loss and serious hardships to the community as well as the working class. The Committee are aware of the fact that the labour upheaval through which the country has been passing is largely occasioned by the serious privations to which the workers have been subjected in consequence of the tremendous economic maladjustments created by the war, especially the excessive rise in the cost of living that has remained uncompensated to a very large extent. The Committee are further of opinion that the labour troubles in the country have been aggravated by the total absence of a well-defined national plan or policy in dealing with the claims of this class, by the delay in redressing grievances by means of conciliation, arbitration, and adjudication, and by the confusion arising out of the unco-ordinated action taken in the matter in different parts of the country.

The sympathy of the Congress with the working class in its struggle to improve its economic position and its status is too well-known to require reiteration and, in furtherence of this, the Committee urge on Governments and employers in the country to take early steps to satisfy the legitimate needs and aspirations of the working class and to remove every cause of genuine discontent by arranging for an impartial examination of the conditions and complaints of the employees and by prompt settlement of points of disagreement by processes of conciliation and arbitration.

The Committee feel further that it is necessary in the general interest to point out that avoidable strikes cannot have the backing of public opinion, and in view of the dire need of the country for more goods and services, hasty or ill-conceived stoppages and the refusal to take advantage of the available means of settlement by negotiation, conciliation and arbitration, constitute a distinct disservice to the community and the working class itself.

The Committee in this connection emphasise that in particular industries and services, which are essential for the existence of the community and on which the continuity of public administration depends, should be immune from dislocation by strikes and lockouts and all disputes between the employees and employers (including governments) should be finally settled by arbitration and adjudication.

The Committee have also, with regret, to take note of the growing lack of discipline and disregard of obligations on the part of the workers which have become evident in some recent labour disputes, and would stress the need for discipline and respect for the rights and requirements of others and of the community as a whole, as the indispensable foundation of a strong trade union movement and the basis of economic progress and orderly social life.

The Committee understand that the undesirable features of the labour situation are due in part to the efforts of certain individuals and sections to exploit the ignorance of the workers and the need of the community for ulterior aims, political or other, and this makes it all the more incumbent on congressmen to develop further contacts with labour and serve its cause to the best of their ability, and to discriminate between occasions on which labour action deserves their support and those which call for restraint or dissuasion.

While the means suggested by the Working Committee for improving the relations between employees and employers and for promoting amicable settlement of disputes will help to relieve the situation, the Committee are convinced that the inflated level of prices which still persists in retarding the restoration of normal economic conditions, and is leading to a vicious race between prices and wages, accentuating the existing difficulties and that no lasting solution of these difficulties will be available so long as a definite policy regarding a future price structure does not take shape and an orderly and just basis is not provided for the economic relations in the country. While these fundamental problems can be handled only by a Central Government the Committee feel that such integration of policy and action in this matter as is possible in the provincial sphere should be attempted immediately.

HINDUSTAN MAZDOOR SEVAK SANGH

Whereas the Congress has to play an increasingly active role in helping the working class to organize itself on sound and healthy lines to achieve its rightful place in industry and society and to make a progressive contribution towards raising the economic and social standards in this country, the Committee have come to the conclusion that a central agency should be provided to encourage, support and coordinate the efforts and activities of Congressmen in the field of labour Organization and the service of the working class. The Committee note with satisfaction that the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh has been functioning in this field for a number of years, and has built up a policy, tradition and machinery well calculated to advance and fulfil the aims which the Congress has in view in relation to labour. The Committee recommend to Congressmen to make the fullest use of the facilities provided by the Sangh for the service of the working class, and to accept its guidance in dealing with labour questions.

In order to give effect to the above resolution a Committee consisting of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lala Gulzarilal Nanda and P. H. Patwardhan be appointed to confer with the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh and report to the Working Committee.

CONGRESS COMMITTEE AND PRAJA MANDALS IN STATES

The attention of the Working Committee has been drawn to the fact that there is some conflict between Praja Mandals and Congress Committees in certain States, more especially in Indore and in other parts of Central India. The general policy of the Congress has long been to encourage the formation of Praja Mandals and like organizations in the States and to discourage the formation of Congress Committees there. This policy holds, and therefore any existing Congress Committee in a State must avoid any conflict on the political or parliamentary field with established Praja Mandals and work in co-operation with them, the political policy being laid down by the Praja Mandals. Further no new Congress Committees should be formed in the States or affiliated by a Provincial Congress Committee. This resolution shall be adhered to till suitable provisions are made for the States in a revision of the Congress Constitution.

Proceedings of the Working Committee

Delhi—Aug. 27—30, 1946

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Delhi from August 27 to 30, 1946. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided. The members present were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shris Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Govind Ballabh Pant, Sarat Chandra Bose, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Kamaladevi, H. G. Patwardhan, Fakhruddin Ahmed, Sardar Pratap Singh, Mirdula Sarabhai and B. V. Keskar, Shris Sarojini Naidu, J. B. Kripalani, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shankar Rao Deo, Asaf Ali, Jai Prakash Narain, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh and Jagjivan Ram were present by special invitation. Gandhiji was present at the after-noon sittings of the Committee.

MINUTES

The Working Committee confirmed the minutes of the proceedings of the Working Commietee held in Wardha from August 8 to 13.

THE WORKING COMMITTEE PASSED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION ON THE CALCUTTA TRAGEDY

CALCUTTA TRAGEDY

The Working Committee have read with deep sorrow reports about the recent happenings in Calcutta in connection with the observance by the Muslim League of the Direct Action Day on the 16th August and subsequent days. They deplore the serious loss of life and property and condemn in particular the acts of brutality committed against defenceless persons, especially women and children. The Committee offer their sympathy to the innocent sufferers of whatever community and party and call upon them to meet the situation with courage, forbearance and fortitude.

On the 29th July the Council of the All India Muslim League passed a resolution deciding upon Direct Action. In support of the resolution inflammatory speeches were made, and subsequently speeches and statements and pamphlets by responsible members of the League and Ministers, and articles in some League newspapers have served to inflame a large section of the Muslim masses.

The Government of Bengal declared the 16th August as a public holiday in spite of protest, and thereby gave an impression that the observance of the 16th August was enjoined by the Government and persons not joining in the observance could claim or get no protection from the Government.

It appears that processionists carried big bamboo sticks, swords, spears, daggers, axes which they brandished when ordering people to shut their shops from the early morning of the 16th and mercilessly assaulted anybody who declined or hesitated to close his shop. Stabbing and looting started early in the day and guns are said to have been used by hooligans in many places. Murders in most brutal circumstances, looting and burning of houses on a large scale followed and lasted for three or four days resulting in the death of several thousand persons and looting and burning of property worth crores of rupees.

There was practically no police, not even traffic police, to be seen on the 16th and even the precaution of sending foot and mounted police to accompany processions, as is done with the Moharram and other processions, was not taken. Even when police were available they rendered no help to peaceful citizens, and frantic appeals for help to officers in charge of police stations were not heeded and the people were told to save themselves as best as they could. The curfew order was not enforced even after it was proclaimed, for the first two nights. Although no transport was available to the public, hooligans used motor lorries. Petrol was freely used for committing arson. Houses and furniture and other articles were smashed or burnt and whatever could be removed was carried away. Dead bodies littered the streets and many dead and dying persons were thrust into manholes of underground sewers or thrown into the river. The Military were not called till long after the havoc had commenced. In some places even the police participated in the looting. After the initial orgy of murders, loot and arson, the Hindus and others retaliated and indulged in reprisals wherever they could and a large number of Muslims were killed.

It is satisfactory to note however that in the midst of this mutual slaughter and inhuman barbarities there were cases where Hindus gave shelter to Muslims in distress and Muslims gave protection to Hindus in difficulty.

The Committee are concerned to note that communal tension in other places has increased and conflicts resulting in murders have arisen. There is a general apprehension that this may extend and unless checked in time may become very widespread. It is the primary duty of every citizen to prevent this and of every government to maintain peace and ensure protection to its peaceful citizens.

In view of the very serious nature of the riots, the like of which has never before happened in any part of the country, it is essential in the opinion of the Working Committee that a thorough enquiry be held by an impartial tribunal which can command the confidence of the public into the circumstances preceding the the 16th and incidents of the 16th and the following days and the steps taken by the government both before and during the riots to meet the situation.

The Working Committee place on record their opinion that the Government of Bengal utterly failed to maintain peace and give protection of life and property to peaceful citizens.

The Committee realise that the wounds inflicted not only on the bodies but the spirit and self-respect of the people will take long to heal. Nevertheless they appeal to them to forget and forgive and to utilise this terrible experience for re-establishing good-will and friendly relations between the different communities which have been so rudely disturbed during recent times. The Working Committee are of opinion that the communal problem cannot be solved by intimidation and violence but by mutual understanding, friendly discussion and, if necessary, by agreed arbitration.

ANNUAL SESSION

The Committee decided that the next annual session of the Congrees be held on November 22, 23, 24, 1946. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant stated that it was proposed to have this session at Meerut in the U. P.

THE A. I. C. C. MEETING

The Committee decide that a meeting of the A. I. C. C. be held at Delhi on September 23, 1946 and, if necessary, on subsequent days.

PRESIDENT'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE VICEROY

The President placed before the Committee the correspondence he had with the Viceroy in regard to the formation of the provisional national government. He also gave them an account of his talks with him.

RELATIONS BETWEEN CONGRESS MINISTERS AND P. C. Cs.

The Working Committee discussed the question of relations between Congress Ministers and the Provincial Congress Committees. The Committee were of of opinion that the resolution passed by the A. I. C. C. at their meeting in Bombay in June 1939 should still govern the relations between the P. C. Cs. and the Congress ministries. This resolution should be circulated afresh among P. C. Cs. It was open to the Central Parliamentary Board to issue further directions in the matter consistent with the main policy laid down in the resolution. The text of the A. I. C. C. resolution referred to above is as follows:

'The Working Committee has repeatedly laid stress on the desirability of co-operation between the Military, the Congress party and the P. C. C. Without such co-operation misunderstandings are likely to arise with the result that the influence of the Congress will suffer. In administrative matters the P. C. C. should not interfere with the discretion of the ministry but it is always open to the executive of the P. C. C. to draw the attention of the Government privately to any particular abuse or difficulty. In matters of policy if there is a difference between the ministry and the P. C. C. reference should be made to the Parliamentary sub-Committee. Public discussion in such matters should be avoided.'

Volunteer Organisation

The President read to the Committee draft rules for the formation and functioning of the Volunteer Organization at the Centre and in Provinces. The Committee generally approved of the draft rules and decided that work in connection with the volunteer organization should begin on the lines laid down in these rules.

Sind Election Dispute

The Committee considered the question referred to it by the Sind Provincial Congress Committee that in a judgment delivered by the Provincial Election Tribunal the whole delegates' elections held in May last were set aside. This created an extraordinary situation necessitating fresh elections throughout the province with their attendant expense and labour. The Committee appointed a Sub-committee consisting of Rajendra Prasad, Govind Ballabh Pant and B. V. Keskar to consider the question and submit its recommendation to the Working Committee. The Working Committee considered and accepted the recommendation of the Sub-committee. The Working Committee's decision is as follows :

'The President of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee has written to the Working Committee complaining against the order of the Provincial Election Tribunal setting aside the elections of all the delegates from the entire Province on account of the non-observance of various provisions of the constitution. Among the provisions for non-compliance with which the elections have been set aside are certain model rules of 1939 supplied by the office of the All India Congress Committee. The Tribunal have treated them as rules overriding rules framed by the Sind Provincial Congress Committee and sanctioned by the A. I. C. C., any provincial rules inconsistent with them being treated as *ultra vires* of the Provincial Congress Committee. The model rules are not really rules framed by the A. I. C. C. for the Provincial Congress Committees but only suggestions by the A. I. C. C. office to serve as samples of rules to be framed by the P. C. Cs. and have no effect unless and until they are adopted by the P. C. C. In this case they were not so adopted and are therefore of no effect. The order, therefore, of the Tribunal setting aside the election of all delegates from the entire Province, based as it is on this misapprehension, is null and void and is accordingly vacated. The Working Committee has no desire to interfere with any order of the Tribunal passed in any individual case on its merits and unaffected by the general principles enunciated above. It can, if necessary, decide pending cases on merit and according to existing rules accepted by the Sind P. C. C.

Common Membership of Working Committee and the National Provincial Government

The Committee considered the question of members of the Working Committee, who join the National Provincial Government, continuing as members of the Working Committee, also whether the Congress President could continue as such after he joined the Government.

In regard to the Congress President, it was the general opinion that he should not continue as President after he joined the Government. A viewpoint was expressed, however, that if members of the Provisional Government could continue as members of the Working Committee, the President should also continue as such. Another viewpoint was that the President may continue as a formal non-functioning President, but that an acting President be chosen to carry on the work of the Congress President

An regards membership of the Working Committee, some were of the opinion that no member of the Provisional Government should continue his membership of the Working Committee. The others were of a contrary opinion, though they thought that such common membership should be limited to a fixed proportion of the Working Committee members—one-third or one-fourth or less to prevent Government members dominating the Working Committee.

The question should be decided by the A. I. C. C. and it was resolved to refer to that body which was meeting next month. In view of the variety of opinions, it was further decided not to place any formal recommendations on the subject, on behalf of the Working Committee, before the A. I. C. C., but to place the different viewpoints and invite decision on them. Members of the Working Committee would be free to place their individual opinions before the A. I. C. C.

Statements by the Congress President

(1) Shri Jai Prakash as Congress President

The Congress President, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru issued the following state-

ment nominating Shri Jai Prakash Narain to be a member of the Working Committee.

Shri P. H. Patwardhan has sent me his resignation from membership of the Congress Working Committee because he felt that he should devote himself more to Congress work in Maharashtra. In the vacancy so caused I am inviting Shri Jai Prakash Narain to fill it and he has accepted my invitation. Therefore I nominate Shri Jai Prakash Narain to be a member of the Working Committee.

I regret that Shri P. H. Patwardhan has had to leave the Working Committee, though we both realise that this is in no way a parting and that we shall have his full co-operation in our work in future. During his brief period in the Working Committee he has impressed all his colleagues with his ability, earnestness and vision and the Committee and the organization as a whole will undoubtedly take full advantage of these qualities of his.

At the time the Working Committee was being formed after the A. I. C. C. meeting, it was my desire to have in the Committee Shri Jai Prakash Narain and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. They felt at that time, however, that they could do more useful work outside the Committee. I had therefore regretfully to leave them out. The Committee as formed, even during this brief period, has done a great deal of work and has faced many vital problems. The New Secretaries, Shri Mridula Sarabhai and Shri Balkrishna Keskar, have applied themselves with vigour to the great task of strengthening and tightening up the Congress organization. The A. I. C. C. office is being expanded and many new departments are being created there. We are inviting the full co-operation of the Provincial Congress Committees in this important work and we are glad that this is forthcoming because Congress work ultimately has to be done by the Provincial Congress and local Co[illegible]. I should like to express my appreciation of the work done by the new General Secretaries and Shri Sadiq Ali, the Permanent Secretary of the A. I. C. C.

It is manifest that the Congress has to face now not only many of its old problems but several entirely new problems. We have grown in strength and with this has come greater responsibility. The formation of the Provisional Government brings new questions before us which will have to be tackled with foresight and care. It is essential that during this tremendous period of transition to full independence the Congress Organization should function with solidarity and efficiency and should do its utmost to serve the cause of the people of India, including all classes and communities. It must be our special endeavour to win over by our service those groups or communities who are apprehensive of the future that is taking shape. We must always remember that the Congress has stood for and stands today for the good of every one in India and it can never look at our problems from a narrow party point of view. In the unfortunate communal tension that exists today the responsibility that the Congress shoulders is all the greater. We have to show by our acts that we are not swept away by any passion or prejudice but that we act always for the good of the whole and with a broad vision including every one in India. In order to achieve this, it is essential that Congressmen and Cogresswomen should put aside their party rivalries and function together. I welcome therefore particularly the inclusion in the Working Committee of Shri Jai Prakash Narain who represents a view point held by a considerable number of Congressmen and whose ability and record of service in the cause of India's freedom has given him an outstanding position in our public life.

I earnestly trust that the Congress Organization will rise to the occasion and show itself fully capable by its discipline, spirit of co-operation and capacity for service to meet the challenge of the time and thus take India rapidly to the goal of freedom and independence which has inspired us for all these years.

(2) THE CALCUTTA TRAGEDY

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru issued the following statement in connection with the Calcutta Tragedy.

Calcutta has been a terrible lesson and the horror and fearful tragedy of the killing and inhuman atrocities there have shaken up all of us.

The new development of violence, involving stabbing, arson and looting, chiefly in cities, obviously cannot be tolerated or else all organised life would become impossible. This has ceased to be merely communal or political. It is a challenge to every decent instinct of humanity and it should be treated as such. What has led up to this, the incitements to violence, the direct invitations to the shedding of blood, are worthy of inquiry so that effective action may be taken.

For the present we are concerned with the immediate steps to be taken. It is well to remember, however, that during the past 26 years of repeated conflict on an intensive and mass scale between the nationalist movement and the British power in India, nothing of this kind has happened. A very few regrettable incidents have occurred, but in spite of high passion and deep feeling, our movement has been carried on at a high level of peaceful and decent behaviour even towards our opponents It is well to compare this with recent events.

In the present then what are we to do? The responsibility for maintaining peace and order must necessarily fall on the Government and its police forces. But every citizen has also a certain responsibility and in a crisis like this it is an obligation for every citizen to discharge this responsibility. For the conflict is between ordinary decency and bestial behaviours. When such conflicts occur there is always danger of even decent persons being swept away by passion and sinking to low levels. We cannot permit this or else there would be no hope for India. Inevitably when one is attacked there has to be self-defence and organised defence by the police as well as by the people. Anti-social and gangster elements can never be allowed to dominate a situation. This requires co-operation between the police and a spirit of accommodation between them so that such anti-social elements might be isolated and dealt with adequately.

It has been the usual practice when a communal riot occurs for a Peace Committee to be formed consisting often of some of the very elements that have caused trouble. Such Peace Committees may be useful but their utility is not enhanced by the presence of these elements. Trouble-makers do no easily transform themselves into messengers of peace and goodwill. It is more necessary for the average citizens to organize themselves so as to prevent trouble or nip it in the bud as soon as it begins. No resident of a Mohalla or Ward wants trouble at home. The residents of each Mohalla should therefore organise themselves for self-protection, that is for the protection of that Mohalla. Their primary concern should be to look after that particular area and the people who live there. Being neighbours they know each other and can rely on each other. Even if some trouble occurs in some other part of the city, people should stick to their Mohalla and keep it immune from it. If all or most of the Mohallas are so organised no trouble can spread and even if it occurs somewhere, it can easily be isolated and ended. Such Mohalla self-protection committees should be open to all the residents of the Mohalla, without any question of religion or party or profession. No elaborate organisation is necessary either in the Mohalla or the city. The more informal all this is the better. With further experience the idea can be developed. Any such attempt at organizing self-protection in small areas should lead to self-reliance and co-operation between the people living there. It should be based also on co-operation with the police and the authorities who have a very difficult task in these critical times. Just as the mohalla is organized for self-defence, so also villages can be organized.

(3) Message to Congress Volunteers

Major General Shah Nawaz Khan issued the following message to Congress Volunteers.

As one charged by the Congress Working Committee with the organisation of volunteers all over the country, I venture to address you at a critical phase of our struggle for freedom when, more than ever before, true and steadfast volunteers are needed. Today power is being transferred from British to Indian hands. The process is difficult and all manner of obstructions are raised by those who object to this change-over and seek to prevent it. Anti-social elements are trying to exploit this situation to their own advantage and we have all learnt with horror of the inhuman deeds perpetrated in Calcutta as well as elsewhere.

As volunteers we have nothing to do with party politics. The main political issue with which we are concerned is the emancipation of India and full freedom for our people. It is obvious that there can be no freedom when gangster and anti-social elements dominate the situation. Normally such elements are suppressed by society. When they get the good-will or passive support of large elements of the population, they flourish and their evil temper infects other people. We have seen recently leaders of parties giving incitements to violent deeds. In the result we have also seen large numbers of innocent people, Hindus and Muslims and others, being brutally done to death. Out of murder and looting and other even worse deeds no true freedom can come. One act leads to another. there is retaliation in kind, and the whole temper of our public life goes down and degradation follows. It is for our volunteers not to allow themselves to be infected by this evil temper, not to become partisans in violent strife, but always to be symbols of Indian freedom and unity and all else that the Congress stands for. As volunteers we do not criticise other people's politics even though we may disagree with them. We work for that unity and common endeavour which is the ideal of the Congress, realising that true freedom and real representative government of the Indian people will only come through that unity. It is because of this that even at this juncture the National Congress has emphasised the unity and left the door open to all others to associate themselves on equal terms in the great work of realising Indian independence wherein all will have equality of opportunity and an equal measure of freedom.

At the same time it must be remembered that true co-operation cannot be achieved by submission to intimidation. No self-respecting individual or organisation can submit to this without giving up the cause for which it stands. In meeting this intimidation, however, we must not allow ourselves to lower our own standards and we must always remember that the various elements in the Indian population, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others, have to be welded together. Therefore we must not act in a way which separates and which leaves the seeds of ill-will behind.

It is gratifying to note that some even of the leaders of the Muslim League have condemned all the recent outrages committed in Calcutta and elsewhere.

The object of organising the Congress Volunteer Corps is to train young men and women for efficient and disciplined national service. Training is important in order to make them efficient, but the main objective is service. That national service can take many forms varying with the environment and the capacity of the volunteer. But in the circumstances of to-day the first service that a volunteer can perform is to help in promoting communal harmony and in protecting the life and honour of our people. In the horror of Calcutta we must not forget that there were many instances of co-operation between Hindus and Muslims, when Hindus gave shelter to Muslims and Muslims to Hindus. A trained volunteer group can do this work much more effectively than old individuals.

The Congress President has recently suggested the formation of Mohalla or Village Committees for self-defence. These will not be Hindu or Muslim committees but joint committees of both, undertaking to protect their own Mohalla or Village. Trained volunteers can help in this task considerably.

In case of public disorder the volunteers should offer to help the people in every way even at the risk of their lives. They should co-operate with the local police, for the main responsibility for maintaining law and order is that of the police. They should patrol disturbed areas but always in such a way as not to hinder the work of the police They should help in rescue and relief work.

The volunteers must on no account, and even in case of provocation, become partisans, and must at all times exercise restraint, remembering the great cause and high principles for which the Indian National Congress stands.

Proceedings of the Working Committee

Delhi—October 23—25, 1946

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Delhi on October 23, 24 and 25, 1946. Pandit Jawharlal Nehru presided. The following members were present. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Govind Ballabh Pant, Rajagopalachariar, Jai Prakash Narain Kamaladevi, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Sardar Pratap Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and Balkrishna Keskar.

Sarojini Naidu, Shankarrao Deo, Hare Krishna Mehtab, Asaf Ali and Jagjivan Ram were present by special invitation. Gandhiji was present during all the sittings.

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Working Committee held at Delhi from September 21 to 25, 1946 were placed before the Committee and confirmed.

REFORMATION OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

The present political situation was discussed during the meetings of the Working Committee on October 23, 24 and 25, 1946. The President informed the Committee of the course of negotiations that led to the offer of five seats to the Muslim League in the Interim Government, and placed the correspondence before them. The Committee generally approved of the line of action that had been taken.

East Bengal

The Working Committee considered the grave situation prevailing in certain districts of East Bengal and passed the following resolution :

The Committee find it hard to express adequately their feeling of horror and pain at the present happenings in East Bengal. Reports published in the press and statements of public workers depict a scene of bestiality and medieval barbarity that must fill every decent human being with shame, disgust and anger. Deeds of violation and abduction of women and forcible religious conversion and of loot, arson and murder, have been committed on a large scale in a predetermined and organized manner by persons often found to be in possession of rifles and other firearms.

The Committee are aware that it has been emphasised in certain quarters that facts have been exaggerated, but communiques of the Bengal Government and statements of the Chief Minister themselves paint such a picture of ghastliness and extensive tragedy that no exaggeration is necessary to add to the effect.

The Committee hold that this outburst of brutality is the direct result of the politics of hate and civil strife that the Muslim League has practised for years past, and of the threats of violence that it has daily held out in the past months. The chief burden for permitting a civil calamity of such proportions to befall the people of the province must rest on the Provincial Government. Further the Governor and the Governor-General who claim to possess special responsibilities in such matters must also share the burden for events in Bengal. Their responsibility becomes the greater when it is recalled that the Calcutta tragedy had clearly given the warning and the minorities living in Eastern Bengal had made representations to the Government and the Governor and demanded protection and preventive measures. The Committee cannot help express their surprise and resentment that in those circumstances not only no preventive measures were taken but even after the outbreak of the crimes no adequate steps were taken in time to stop them and to apprehend the criminals. Instead an untenable attempt was made to cover up willing connivance or incompetence or both under the pretext of exaggeration of facts.

The Committee, fully conscious as they are of the inadequacy of an expression of feeling on such an occasion, do express their heartfelt sympathy with the sufferers in East Bengal. They wish further to appeal to all decent persons of all communities in Bengal and elsewhere not only to condemn these crimes, but also to take all adequate steps to defend the innocent from lawlessness and barbarity, no matter by whomsoever committed. At the same time the Committee must sound a warning against retaliatory outbreaks of communal violence. Nationalism and communalism are in a final death grip. The riots in Bengal clearly form parts of a pattern of political sabotage calculated to destroy Indian nationalism and check the advance of the country towards democratic freedom. Therefore the Committee cannot lay too much emphasis on the warning that communalism can only be fought with nationalism and not with counter-communalism which can only end in perpetuating foreign rule.

Acharya Kripalani, the President-elect, is now in Noakhali and will visit the other affected areas in Bengal. The Committee are awaiting his report, and will advise further action on taking into consideration all the information made available to it.

Report of the Congress Constitution Sub-Committee

As Acharya J. B. Kripalani, Convener, was absent in East Bengal, it was decided to request him to prepare and get the final draft sanctioned by the Constitution Sub-Committee and circulate it to members of the Working Committee and the Subjects Committee. The Working Committee will consider it at its next meeting.

Kashmir

Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel informed the Committee of the correspondence that has taken place with the Kashmir authorities in connection with the resolution passed by the Working Committee at its last session. It was decided that a committee consisting of Mahatma Gandhi, Sadar Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad be formed to appoint the personnel of the deputation and to decide on further course of action. The terms of reference of the deputation shall be the same as laid down in the Kashmir Resolution dated September 25, 1946.

General Secretaries Report for Years, 1940 to 1946

As the report was not yet ready the General Secretaries were authorised to request Acharya J. B. Kripalani to go through the report and circularise draft printed copies to members of the Subjects Committee and the Working Committee for their sanction at the next meeting.

Provincial Quotas

The Working Committee took note of the applications for exemption from or reduction in the provincial quotas of contribution to the A. I. C. C., especially the application received from Bengal. The General Secretaries were authorised to inform the Provincial Congress Committee that the revised quotas should be paid up at the latest by November 20th, 1946. The Bengal Provincial Congress Committee be informed that if, due to the present unsettled conditions, they are unable to pay immediately, they may pay in instalments but not later than the end of December 1946.

Hindustani Seva Dal

The draft constitution as approved by the Provincial Congress Committee Volunteer representatives conference was placed for consideration and sanction of the Working Committee. After some general discussion, it was decided to postpone final consideration till the next meeting of the Working Committee.

Proceedings of the Working Committee

From 19th to 20th November, 1946 at New Delhi. and on 21st and 22nd November. 1946 at Congress Nagar, Meerut

Meetings of the Working Committee were held at New Delhi on 19th and 20th November, 1946, and from 21st onwards at Congress Nagar, Meerut. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the meetings from 19th to 21st November, 1946, and from 22nd November onwards the meetings were held under the presidentship of Acharya J. B. Kripalani.

Summary of Proceedings of the Meetings

Held from 19th. to 21st. November, 1946

The following members were present :

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Govind Ballabh Pant, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Rajagopalachariar, Jai Prakash Narain, Kamaladevi, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Fakhruddin Ahmed, Sardar Pratap Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and B. V. Keskar.

J. B. Kripalani, Sarojini Naidu, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Asaf Ali, Shankar Rao Deo, Profulla Chandra Ghosh and Jagjivan Ram were present by special invitation.

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting of the Working Committee held at Delhi from October 23rd to 25th, 1946, were placed before the Working Committee and confirmed.

Constituent Assembly

The present political situation was discussed during the meetings of the Working Committee on November 19th and 20th. The President informed the Committee of the course of negotiations that were taking place in connection with the calling of the Constituent Assembly. The Committee gave its approval to the stand taken by the President in this connection.

The following resolutions were passed by the Working Committee :

Pandit Madanmohan Malviya

The Working Committee placed on record their profound sense of grief and loss at the death of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya who served the country with signal devotion in various capacities for an unbroken period of over sixty years, and who was thrice President of the Indian National Congress. India thinks of his manifold services and achievements with pride and gratitude. He was an embodiment of the rich culture of India and reminded us of the rishis of old. In the Benares Hindu University we have a memorial of his sacrifice, energy and love of India. The Working Committee offer their grategul homage to his memory and convey their heartfelt condolence to the members of his bereaved family, with whom the whole nation is mourning.

Bihar

The Committee, at its last session, had occasion to pass a resolution on the situation is East Bengal. Since then events have happened in certain districts of Bihar that fill the Committee with horror and pain. Deeds of loot, arson and murder and other forms of gruesome brutality have been committed on such a wide scale that they must create grave concern in the minds of all lovers of freedom and humanity. The Committee sympathise deeply with all those who have suffered in this calamity.

The Committee in their last resolution had warned the police against retaliatory communal violence, and they repeat that warning with all the emphasis at their command. Mutual strife and bloodshed cannot lead any section of the Indian people to its desired goal, whatever that may be, while the right of innocent people to defend themselves adequately against violence is admitted, it is foolish and dangerous to the national interest and to the interest of the people concerned to avenge one wrong by another wrong.

The Committee feel relieved that the situation in Bihar is rapidly returning to normal and they feel assured that the Provincial Government and the Provincial Congress Organization will soon be able to bring peace and order to the Province. The Committee are concerned to learn that steps of rehabilitation, such as taking refugees back to their villages, are being obstructed by persons interested in keeping up an atmosphere of bitterness and hatred. They trust that the task of rehabilitation will be carried on with the help and co-operation of all sections of the people.

The Committee hope that the events of the past weeks will not fail to impress every one that the politics of hate only lead to ruin and destruction and that all the communities and sections of the people, who obviously have common objectives and common problems to solve, must unite and face their tasks together and achieve together their common objectives of freedom and removal of poverty.

The Committee call upon all Congressmen and committees to take every possible step to put an end to the spirit of retaliation, to restore a sense of security and to bring about reconciliation.

KASHMIR

The Working Committee have previously expressed their disapproval of the activities of the Kashmir authorities during the past few months in repressing the people of the State and denying them their normal civil liberties. The Committee had proposed to send a deputation to inquire into these matters in Kashmir State and had invited the State authorities to co-operate in this task. The response from those authorities was not satisfactory and conditions in various parts of India delayed any action being taken on the previous resolution. Recent reports state that the Kashmir authorities are preventing free and fair elections to the State Assembly and have arrested the president and members of the Election Committee of the Kashmir National Conference. The Committee take a serious view of this flouting of public opinion and of activities which must reduce the coming elections to a farce. The Committee will now take early steps to implement their resolution.

The Working Committee passed the following draft resolutions for the Subjects Committee meetings to be held at Meerut from 21st November onwards.

1. Condolence. 2. Ratification. 3. Constituent Assembly. 4 South Africa.
5. East Africa. 6. Greetings to Indonesian Republic. 7. Communal Strife.
8. States. 9. Retrospect. 10. Revision of the Constitution. 11. Congress Manifesto.

(*For text of the resolutions see proceedings of the Congress*)

Proceedings of the Meeting held on the

22nd November, 1946

A meeting of the Working Committee was held on the morning of 22nd November, under the presidentship of Acharya J. B. Kripalani.

LABOUR SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

The Report dated 20th November 1946 of the Labour Sub-Committee appointed by the Working Committee on 13th August, 1946, was considered. It was decided to postpone consideration and decision till the next meeting of the Working Committee.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The Constitution Sub-Committee's report, was placed before the Working Committee. The general opinion of the members was that the system of registering a worker (as mentioned in the resolution below) should be so evolved that it becomes automatic. The following draft resolution was passed for the Subjects Committee.

In view of the great development of the Congress organisation and the new conditions that have arisen, it is desirable to revise the Congress Constitution in order to make the Congress as widely representative of the Indian people as possible and at the same time a more efficient instrument for giving effect to the national will. With this end in view, the Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to amend and revise the Congress Constitution on the basis of the following principles :

1. The four-anna membership be abolished and instead a broader franchise approaching adult franchise be introduced.

2. All elective Congress Committees to consist of workers in the field of constructive, organisational, parliamentary, or any other national activity.

3. Elections to be held every three years.

The Constitution as and when finally passed by the A I. C. C. shall be given effect to."

It was also decided to authorise the existing Constitution Sub-Committee to frame a constitution on the principles laid down in the above resolution and place it before the next session of the Working Committee.

Congress Manifesto

The Working Committee considered the requisition for a resolution sent in by 25 members of the All India Congress Committee and decided to recommend the following resolution to the Subjects Committee :

"This Congress adopts the principles and programme outlined in the Congress Election Manifesto in regard to the content of Swaraj. In the opinion of this Congress Swaraj cannot be real for the masses unless it makes possible the achievement of a society in which democracy extends from the political to the social and economic sphere, and in which there would be no opportunity for privileged classes to exploit the bulk of the people, nor for gross inequalities such as exist at present. Such a society would ensure individual liberty, equality of opportunity and the fullest scope for every citizen for the development of his personality.

Non-Official Resolutions

The Committee considered the non-official resolutions received by the A. I. C. C. Office. A great many of these resolutions were fit for reference to either the Working Committee or provincial governments. It was however decided to leave it to the A. I. C. C. to consider these resolutions.

Subjects Committee Meeting

Meerut—21st and 22nd. November, 1946

A meeting of the Subjects Committee was held at Meerut in the Congress pandal on November 21st and 22nd, 1946. Acharya J. B. Kripalani presided.

According to custom the A. I. C. C. should have met earlier than the Subjects Committee to transact necessary formal business but owing to some delay in making available to A. I. C. C. members the report of the General Secretaries for the period 1940-1946, it was decided to hold the A. I. C. C. meeting later.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a brief speech referred to the circumstances in which he found himself obliged to relinquish the office of the Congress President. He requested Acharya J. B. Kripalani, the President-elect, to take the chair.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel paid a tribute to the wisdom and statesmanship with which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru piloted the ship of the Congress during the office of the Congress President.

The following condolence resolution was moved from the Chair and passed unanimously.

(For the text of the resolution see proceedings of the Congress)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then moved the resolution on "ratification" recommended by the Working Committee. It was seconded by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant.

The resolution was opposed by some members of the A. I. C. C. but it was passed by a big majority. Thirty members voted against it.

(For text of the resolution see the proceedings of the Congress Session).

The resolution on South Africa, East Africa, and Greetings to the Indonesian republic were moved from the Chair and passed unanimously.

(For text of the resolutions see proceedings of the Congress Session).

Summary of Proceedings of the Meeting

Held on November 22, 1946

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved the resolution on 'retrospect.' It was seconby the Shri S. K. Patil. The resolution was passed unanimously.

(For text of the resolution see the proceedings of the Congress Session).

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant then moved the resolution on Communal Strike which was seconded by Dr. Rajendra Prasad. The resolution provoked a lively debate in which a large number of speakers participated. Some amendments were moved to it but they were later withdrawn. The resolution was passed unanimously.

(For text of the resolution see the proceedings of the Congress Session).

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya moved the resolution on Indian States. It was seconded by Shri Balvant Rai Mehta. Several amendments were moved to the resolution but they were later withdrawn except one by Aruna Asafali. A small verbal amendment suggesting that a sentence in the resolution beginning with 'the political department' be constituted into a separate paragraph was accepted by the mover of the resolution. The rest of the amendment was put to vote and rejected. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

(For text of the resolution see proceedings of the Congress).

The resolution on Congress Manifesto was moved by Shri Profulla Chandra Ghosh and seconded by Dr. Safiuddin Kitchlew. It was passed unanimously.

(For text of the resolution see the proceedings of the Congress).

The resolution on Constituent Assembly was moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and passed unanimously.

(For text of the resolution see proceedings of the Congress)

The resolution on 'Amendments to the Congress Constitution' was moved by Shri Shankarrao Deo. It was seconded by Shri R. R. Diwakar. An amendment moved by Shri Purshottamdas Tandon was accepted by the mover on behalf of the Working Committee. The amended resolution was adopted by the house unanimously. The resolution as recommended by the Working Committee was as follows:

'In view of the great development of the Congress organisation and the new conditions that have arisen, it is desirable to revise the Congress Constitution in order to make the Congress as widely representative of the Indian people as possible and at the same time a more efficient instrument for giving effect to the national will. With this end in view, the Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to amend and revise the Congress Constitution on the basis of the following principles.

1. The four-anna membership be abolished and instead a broader franchise approaching adult franchise be introduced.
2. All elective Congress Committees to consist of workers in the field of constructive, organisational, parliamentary, or any other national activity.
3. Elections to be held every three years.

The Constitution as and when finally passed by the A. I. C. C. shall be given effect to.

The amended resolution as adopted by the Subjects Committee was as follows:

'In view of the development of the Congress organisation and the new conditions that have arisen, the Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to amend and revise the Congress Constitution in order to make the Congress as widely representative of the Indian people as possible and at the same time a more efficient instrument for giving effect to the national will.

The Constitution as and when finally passed by the A. I. C. C. shall be given effect to.'

Two motions were received by the President signed by 25 delegates which the signatories wanted to place before the open session. The motion signed by Shri K. K. Sidhwa and others asked Pandit Nehru to ask the Viceroy to ask the Muslim League members to resign from the interim government owing to Mr. Jinnah's recent declaration that the Muslim League will not join the Constituent Assembly. The President ruled Shri Sidhwa's motion out of order.

There was another resolution signed by Shri Kala Venkat Rao and 24 other delegates in which the Congress was asked to accept the principle of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis. On an assurance by the President that the resolution will be considered by the Working Committee Kala Venkat Rao withdrew his motion.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

The A. I. C. C. office received notice of over thirty non-official resolutions which A. I. C. C. members wished to move at the Subjects Committee meeting. The resolutions came up before the Subjects Committee after it had sat for over seven hours without a break. The Subjects Committee therefore had neither time nor inclination at that stage to given serious thought to the non-official resolutions. It was decided that the resolutions be referred to the Working Committee for consideration and disposal.

The Indian National Congress Session

Meerut—23rd and 24th November, 1946

The Meerut Session of the Congress met under the presidentship of Acharya J. B. Kripalani on November 23 and 24, 1946 in a big pandal erected for the purpose. The number of delegates present at the Session was 1306 out of the total number of 2950 delegates returnable from all provinces. Besides delegates there was a large number of visitors. The number would have been much greater but for some unfortunate incidents in and around Meerut necessitating cancellation of all facilities for the reception and accommodation of visitors.

Shri Raghubir Narain Sinha, the Chairman of the Reception Committee read his welcome speech. He extended a cordial welcome to the president-elect and delegates to the historic city of Meerut.

He was followed by representatives of Indians Overseas and others who extended to the Congress their fraternal greetings. Among them were:

(1) The Hon'ble A. D. Patel, M.L.C,, Bar-at-law (Fiji).
(2) Shri J. A. Thivy—President, Malaya Indian Congress.
(3) Sardar Sucha Singh (Singapore).
(4) The Hon'ble Mohammed Ayub Edum, M.L.C. (Br. Guiana).
(5) Shri Dh'armavir Kapil (Kenya).
(6) Dr. Katial—(India League, London).
(7) Shri Iqbal Singh, Federation of Indian Associations (Great Britain).

Acharya Kripalani then delivered his presidential address which took over an hour.

The resolutions passed by the Subjects Committee were then placed one by one before the open session of the Congress.

The following condolence resolution was moved from the chair and passed unanimously:

"The Congress expresses its deep sense of sorrow and loss at the deaths of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Shri Vijayaraghavachariar, Shri S. Srenivasa Iyengar, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, Shri Bhulabhai Desai, Shrimani Kasturba Gandhi, Begum Azad, Shri Mahadeo Desai, Shri Satyamurti, Shri Shiv Prasad Gupta, Shri R. S. Pandit, Shri Yusuf Imam, Shri Pyarelal Sharma, Shri S. Dutt, Dr. P. C. Ray, Shri Allah Bux, Babu Ram Dayal Singh, Shri Charu Ghosh, Shri Kamdar Khan, Shri Ramdas Pantulu, Shri Hemchandra Barua, Shri Saraladevi Choudhurani, Dr. T. Kesram Rasul, Shri K. S. Gupta, Shri Chandrabhal Jauhari, Shri Nivasrao Kaujalgi, Shri Khedanlal, Shri Hanmantrao Kaujalgi, Shri Hardyal Nag, Maulana Abdul Kadir Kasoori, Lala Dunichand, Ram Kishan, Shri Sachindra Nath Sanyal, Shri Subila Bai Nayar, Shri Narayanrao Joshi, Shri Dondu Narain Raju, Shri Yakub Hussain, Dr. T. V. S. Shastry, Shri Baba Saheb Soman, of Belgaum, Dr. Ashutosh Das, Dr. Vishwanath Mukerji, Shri Bindhya Basini Prasad, Shri Vasukaka Joshi, Mohd. Yamin Dar, Shri Binoyendra Nath Sahib, Shri Ramananda Chatterji, Shri Yallai Sannial, Shri Sadashiv Laxman Somaus, Shri Basant Kumar Majumder, Shri Surendra Mohan Mitra, Brajkishore Prasad, Bhikulal Chandak, Shri V. V. Jogiah Pantulu, Shri K. V. R. Swami, Shri Kalinath Ray, and Shri Niranjan Patnaik.

Pandit Jawaharlat Nehru moved the following resolution entitled 'Retrospect'. It was seconded by Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. The resolution was passed unanimously.

RETROSPECT

This Congress, meeting after six and a half years of war and upheaval and frightfulness, pays its homage to the memory of all those who have given their lives in the cause of India's freedom and the emancipation of India's millions.

During these years the World War raged in all its fury, and in India the armed might of an alien imperialist power tried to crush the spirit of freedom and the passionate desire of the Indian people to gain independence. The Indian people resisted this ruthless onslaught and through travail and agony demonstrated their will to freedom. The complete failure and incompetence of an out-of-date political and administrative system resulted in famine which took its toll of millions of lives.

The end of the World War has not brought peace to the world and the appearance of the atom bomb as a weapon of war, with its frightful and horrible powers of destruction, has brought to a crisis the immoral and self-destructive elements of the present day political, economic and spiritual structure of the world. Civilization is likely to destroy itself unless it gives up its imperialist and acquisitive tendencies and bases itself on the peaceful co-operation of free nations and on the maintenance of the dignity of man.

In India, as elsewhere, the period of transition from the old world, which has demonstrated its failure to the new, to which millions look with hope and for which they strive is full of peril and reactionary forces are every where trying to prevent the establishment of a new order of peace and freedom. This Congress has always stood for the full co-operation of free nations and for removal of political and economic inequality between nations and peoples. India has been and is today the crux of the problem of freedom of subject peoples. On the complete emancipation of the Indian people depends the freedom of vast numbers of others in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. World peace and progress depend upon the solution of the Indian problem. This Congress, therefore, reiterates its firm determination to continue the struggle for India's complete freedom till she becomes an independent nation co-operating with others on an equal basis for the establishment of peace, freedom and progress everywhere. India, by virtue of her present position and her potential power, cannot accept a secondary position in the comity of nations.

For more than sixty years the National Congress has led the people of India towards this ideal and through struggle and constructive effort it has built up the strength of the India people. It has based itself on high ideals and endeavoured to put before the nation moral standards of conduct both on the individual and on the political plane because it was convinced that greatness of achievement comes to a nation only by keeping high objectives before it and by pursuing methods which are worthy of a great people. In these days of bitter and tragic internal conflict and a lowering of these ideals, this Congress reiterates its faith in the high destiny of India and the ideals which have moved the Indian people. Any weakness, complacency or straying from the straight path to freedom may well imperil the independence for which the people of India have struggled and which is now within their grasp.

The Congress, therefore, calls upon the people to put an end to internecine conflict and to face internal and external dangers as a united people in the spirit in which they have fought in the past for India's independence. That struggle has not ended and may yet require many sacrifices.

RATIFICATION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel then moved the following resolution on "Ratification." It was seconded by Dr. B. V. Keskar. The resolution after a debate was adopted by the Congress.

This Congress, having considered the various political developments resulting from the visit of the British Cabinet Delegation to India, the calling of the Constituent Assembly to determine the constitution of free India, and the formation of the Interim National Government, confirms and ratifies the decisions taken thereon from time to time by the Working Committee and the All India Congress Committee.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Acharya Narendra Deo moved the following resolution on the Constituent Assembly. It was seconded by Rao Sahib Patwardhan. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

On the eve of the summoning of the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for India, this congress declares that it stands for an independent sovereign Republic wherein all powers and authority are derived from the people, and for a constitution wherein social objectives are laid down to promote freedom, progress and equal opportunity for all the people of India, so that this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full contribution to the promotion of world peace and the progress and welfare of mankind, and directs all congressmen to work to this end.

Summary of Proceedings on the 24th, November, 1946

The Congress Session met on the 24th November at 12 noon. The following resolutions on South Africa, East Africa and Greetings to the Indonesian Republic were moved from the chair and passed unanimously by the Congress.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Congress endorses the resolution passed by the All India Congress Committee on July 6, 1946 congratulating the South African Indians on their resistance to the segregation policy of the white people of that country, and records its satisfaction at the excellent work done by the Indian Delegation to the U. N. O. General Assembly exposing the narrow racialism of the South African Government to the full glare of world opinion. The Congress emphatically refutes the suggestion of Field Marshall Smuts in this connection that the Indian people are also guilty of racialism such as is shamelessly indulged in by the South African Government. The Indian people and all their leaders are energetically engaged in working out the fullest equality to all the nationals inhabiting this large and great country in all walks of life, political, social and economic, and laws of this country discountenance any discrimination whatsoever, whereas the policy of the South African Government and the white minority of that country is flagrantly racial and discriminatory and is a menace to world-peace and civilisation.

EAST AFRICA

The Indian National Congress endorses the resolution of the Working Committee passed on August 6, 1945 regarding the situation in East Africa. The Congress views with great concern the attempts made in that country to make permanent the restrictions of the war-time period and converting them into a permanent anti-Indian Law. The recorded admissions of even the confirmed enemies of Indian progress prove that Indians were in East Africa before any European set his foot on that soil and fully support the claim of the Indians in East Africa that the laws reserving the highlands for the white people and restricting the rights of Indians are most immoral and unjustifiable.

GREETINGS TO INDONESIAN REPUBLIC

The Indian National Congress sends its greetings to the Republic of Indonesia and its congratulations to the people of Indonesia on the success which has attended their gallant struggle for freedom. The Congress assures them of the goodwill of the Indian people and their desire to co-operate in the fullest measure with the people of Indonesia in the promotion of the freedom and advancement of the nations and peoples of Asia.

INDIAN STATES

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Shri Balvant Rai Mehta proposed and seconded the following resolution on Indian States. Some amendments were moved to the resolution but they were later withdrawn except one by Shri Ashoke Mehta. The amendment was put to vote and defeated. The resolution was passed unanimously.

The Congress has always considered the problem of the States in India as an integral part of the problem of Indian independence. On the eve of independence this problem assumes a new urgency and has to be solved in the context of that independence. A few of the Rulers of Indian States have appreciated the rapid changes taking place in the country and have tried to adapt themselves to some extent to these changes.

But the Congress has noted with regret that even now many of the Rulers of the Indian States and their Ministers are not only not bringing their administrations into line even with the Provinces in regard to representative institutions and effective popular control over the administration, but, on the contrary, are endeavouring to crush the political aspirations of their people and are thus coming into conflict with the vital urge for freedom which animates the people of the States as well as of the rest of India. Some of the larger States in India, which should have set an example to the rest, are particularly guilty of these reactionary and repressive activities.

The Political Department, which still continues to be directly under the Crown Representative and wholly beyond the control of the Government of India, continues to function in a way which is reactionary and opposed to the wishes of the people the States.

The Congress views with strong disapproval this segregation of the Political Department from the Government of India, who are rightly interested in all the activities of that Department, and hopes that this anomaly will be ended as early as possible. It considers it wholly untenable for the British Government to claim through the Viceroy and Crown Representative to have any interest in the States other than or apart from the Government of India.

This Congress disapproves of any scheme of merger or federation among States without reference to and without the approval of the people concerned. Such activities, often carried out secretly by the Political Department without even the knowledge of the people, are a negation of self-determination and of the right of the Indian people to determine their future. The Congress is firmly of opinion that every decision regarding the States must be taken by the elected representatives of the people of the States, and no decision that ignores the people can be valid or binding upon them. In particular, the representatives of the States in the Constituent Assembly should be chosen by their people.

In view of the growing crisis in the States, the Congress declares that it considers the struggle for freedom in the States an essential part of the larger struggle in India. It views with sympathy the efforts of the people of the States to establish civil liberties and responsible government as integral part of the free and independent India.

CONGRESS MANIFESTO

Shri Jai Prakash Narain moved the resolution on Congress Manifesto. It was seconded by Prof. Ranga. An amendment was moved to the resolution. The amendment was withdrawn, the mover of the resolution having agreed to incorporate the substance of it in the resolution. The words added to the original resolution were: 'In the August resolution' before 'in the Congress Election Manifesto.' The amended resolution which was passed unanimously read as follows:

This Congress adopts the principles and programme outlined in the August resolution and the Congress Election Manifesto in regard to the content of Swaraj. In the opinion of this Congress Swaraj cannot be real for the masses unless it makes possible the achievement of a society in which democracy extends from the political to the social and economic sphere, and in which there would be no opportunity for privileged classes to exploit the bulk of the people, nor for gross inequalities such as exist at present. Such a society would ensure individual liberty, equality of opportunity and the fullest scope for every citizen for the development of his personality.

COMMUNAL STRIFE

The following resolution on Communal Strife was moved by Dr. Rajendra Prasad and seconded by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan also spoke on this resolution and explained its implications. Speeches on this resolution were heard with great attention. So wide and deep was the interest roused by the resolution that notice of 16 amendments was received by the Chair and 25 delegates gave notice of their intention to speak on the resolution. As it was necessary for the business before the session to be finished in the shortest time possible the president appealed to the delegates to withdraw their amendments most of which were of a verbal character. Most of the amendments were withdrawn and the few that remained were put to vote and negatived. The resolution as moved by Dr. Rajendra Prasad was passed unanimously. The full text of the resolution is as follows:

The Congress views with pain, horror and anxiety the tragedies of Calcutta, in East Bengal, in Bihar and in some parts of Meerut District. The acts of brutality committed on men, women and children fill every decent person with shame and humiliation. These new developments in communal strife are different from any previous disturbances and have involved murders on a mass scale as also mass conversions enforced at the point of the dagger, abduction and violation of women and forcible marriage. These crimes, apparently for political purposes, put an end to all sense of security and are ominous to the peace, tranquility and progress of India.

The responsibility for this widespread brutality must rest with the preaching of hatred and violence for political purposes and the degradation and exploitation of religion for political ends. Responsibility must also rest with those who claim to possess special responsibilities and who, in spite of warning failed to discharge them and allowed matters to proceed to the extreme limit of endurance.

The Congress would warn the country against all propaganda of violence and hate. It is not by these methods that the differences between the various communities in India can be settled. They can only be settled by peaceful means. The attempts of the Congress to work out a peaceful and just solution of the communal problem have been repeatedly thwarted by the Muslim League. The advocacy and use of violence will injure the interests of the country as a whole as well as sectional interests. The Congress also warns all communities against revenge and reprisals. The continuance of a vicious circle of reprisal would mean playing into the hands of the internal and external enemies of the nation.

The immediate problem is to produce a sense of security and rehabilitate homes and villages which have been broken up and destroyed. Women who have been abducted and forcibly married must be restored to their homes. Mass conversions which have taken place forcibly have no significance or validity and the people affected by them should be given every opportunity to return to their homes and to the life of their choice.

The Congress reiterates its conviction that the only solution of the communal problem is complete independence from foreign control and appeals to the people not to allow communal passion to sidetrack the national struggle at this last stage of our march to freedom.

REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION

The resolution on the Congress Constitution was moved from the Chair and passed unanimously.

In view of the great development of the Congress organisation and the new conditions that have arisen, the Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to amend and revise the Congress Constitution in order to make the Congress as widely representative of the Indian people as possible and at the same time a more efficient instrument for giving effect to the national will.

The Constitution as and when finally passed by the A. I. C. C. shall be given effect to.

Acharya Kripalani's Speech

With the passsing of this resolution the business before the session concluded. The president, Acharya Kripalani, in his concluding speech made an earnest appeal for Hindu-Muslim Unity and truth and non-violence as our infallible guide in the country's march to freedom and peace. The text of the speech is given below.

"Friends, I thank you with all my heart for having co-operated with me in disposing of the business before this house. I have no doubt your help was extended to me because you realise that we are living in critical times when any false step may take away what we are on the point of getting and make our goal distant. We are living in the midst of civil strife, civil strife of a nature that humiliates us and makes of us a laughing-stock before the world. Let me repeat what I told you before, that we in India—whether Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians or followers of any other denomination—cannot leave this country. No other country can be ours. We have to live here and live together. Let us then live in peace and brotherhood. If we do not so live, Nature will make us suffer, and after great sufferings we will have to reconcile ourselves to the fact that those whom God has united none can separate. Therefore I say, a Hindu who offends a Muslim is an enemy of his community and of his country and a Muslim who offends a Hindu likewise destroys his religion and the freedom of his country. We have got to live like brothers and so must we live."

"Another thing I should like to mention is this: During the course of our discussions here, the name of Netaji was often brought in and we were taken to task for not having included it in out condolence resolution. We were accused because we have not lost hope of his being alive. It pains me to see that Netaji's name should be invoked to serve the narrow ends of party politics. Let no one make an all-India leader a party leader. I tell you, Subhas Bose does not belong to the Forward Bloc; he does not belong to the I. N. A.; he does not belong to the radicals of any group. He belongs to India for whom he worked and for whom I hope he is still living. When I was in Bombay I was asked to speak about the I. N. A. I said that but for my faith in non-violence I would have acted exactly as Subhas Babu did, and felt proud of it. I would have thought that I had done the greatest service to my country. I would have thought that I had done what many great people have done in history. Going away from the prison-house, that India is, to organise an independence movement outside India is the greatest patriotic service that a man can do provided he believes in armed resistance. I do not believe in that but I do not want to impose my standards of conduct upon others. I judge other people by the standards they have kept before themselves provided those standards are recognised by humanity as high standards. That evil should be resisted by war and violence is recognised by the priests of great religions even today. How then can I in the pride of this new religion of Mahatma Gandhi, which has converted me to non-violence condemn a brother of mine who has done the greatest service to the country? But I say to you, I warn you, do not think that Subhas Bose belongs to the Forward Bloc or to the I. N. A. He belongs to us all. Let me remind you that once before when he was reported to have died, Mahatma Gandhi the man of non-violence was the first man to send a telegram of condolence to his mother and the Working Committee had joined in it. This had irritated Sir Stafford Cripps who was negotiating with us at the time and had annoyed the British Government. But we did not care. Great men and great prophets who were universal were made sectional by their followers in the past and I urge you in God's name, not to repeat the same mistake in the case of Subhas Bose."

Addressing his friends the radicals, Acharya Kripalani said, "I do not know the meaning of the word radical in Congress politics. It is always bad to be entangled in words. If it is meant that radicals are those who are lukewarm in their advocacy of non-violence then I must tell you that is a wrong interpretation of the word. A believer in non-violence may be as revolutionary as a believer in violence. We must go beyond the words. I have learned non-violence from Gandhiji. Once I believed in violence and to-day I need not hesitate to tell you that I belonged to the group of revolutionaries of 1906-1907. But I never felt so fearless, so bold, so strong, as when I accepted the creed of non-violence from Gandhiji. Even in the days of my revolutionary life I hope I was a brave man and I would not have hesitated to mount the gallows but I tell you that in those days wherever I went, whether it was in the train, or on the road, my eyes were directed behind me to see if a policeman or a C. I. D, man was following me. When I talked to a friend, I would calculate whether he was really a friend or an enemy. But from the time I accepted non-violence I did not care who was coming behind me, who was going before me. When I accepted non-violence I did not care whether he was a friend to whom I was talking or an enemy, whether he belonged to the police or the C. I. D. I tell you, if I was brave then, I have become fearless to-day. It is this that made me go to Noakhali not caring what had happened there or what would happen to me there. When I was in the revolutionary movement I was afraid of even myself, least in an unguarded movement I may give away a secret or a friend. When I am non-violent the police may torture me but what will they get out of me? There is nothing that I have to conceal. If I tell the truth nothing can happen to me. Even this fear of myself is gone because of non-violence. Let me tell you that this fearlessness can come only through non-violence. Violence may be brave but that bravery always falls short of the fearlessness of non-violence. Non-violence never suspects anybody. Non-violence never looks behind. For non-violence there is no police. For non-violence there is no C. I. D. For non-violence there is no enemy in the world. A non-violent soldier stands straight and erect and death has no terror for him. Death has no terror for the violent soldier also but the violent soldier's bravery is always tinged with some fear. Here (in this House) people have repeatedly talked of violence and been appluated. Let me tell you that if this country is to rise and prosper it shall do so only through non-violence. There is no other way for us. We are divided into so many groups—political, economic, social and religious—that if we use violence against the foreign enemy, we are sure to use that violence against each other. They who live by the sword shall perish by the sword. You see that happening in the world around you. To-day the world has introduced the atom bomb but something worse will come unless it takes stock of what it has been doing up to to-day. I do not condemn people because they use violence in a good cause. Non-violence is something new but I want to place it before you because I have tried both violence and non-violence and I tell you that I have found non-violence as a superior weapon for the redress of wrongs. The world too will one day find it a superior weapon. Many of my radical friends do not belong to the age of Gandhi. I belong to that age. In 1920 and '30 when Gandhiji introduced Satyagraha in Indian politics I was a young man. I saw how life was infused in the masses through non-violence; how they became bold and fearless; how they bore lathi charges and sometimes even bullets. To-day because there are communal riots and the horizon appears a little dark we get confused and in that confusion the best of us seem to lose their faith in non-violence. We think that nothing can be accomplished through non-violence; but I tell you the light has been lighted and it shall guide us whether we wish it or not. It may not be to-day or to-morrow. Prophets live and they die but their doctrines often fructify after centuries after centuries. How many followers did Budha have when he died? How many had Mohammed? When Christ died, he had twelve disciples and all the twelve repudiated him as we are to-day repudiating Gandhiji. Yet Christianity lives; Christ lives; his scripture is the scripture of the world. He has conquered the world even as Buddha conquered the world. Do not look to us. We may betray the master not thrice but thirty times thrice and yet the master and his doctrine will live. The doctrine is based upon eternal truth. Without non-violence, life would be impossible. If we are going to solve our problems by untruth, by crooked diplomacy, I say our problems will not be solved. The world's problems will not be solved. Let me tell you in one word the difference between Socialism and Gandhism. It is that Gandhi holds that your means shall be as pure as your aims are high; that high aims cannot be served by low and crooked means; that high aims are contaminated by the low means used. This is in a nutshell the difference between Western Socialism and the Eastern Socialism of the old 'Bania.' I tell you the world will not be safe from war, from bloodshed until this doctrine is accepted, whether it is accepted to-day or after a century. If it is after a century then that century will be a troublesome century for humanity. It will not be a peaceful century. Therefore I appeal to you, as I have always appealed to my radical friends, try to understand what lies behind Gandhiji's philosophy. I have given something of it in my presidential address. Gandhiji stands for democracy; he stands for economic and social equality; he stands for international peace. Is there a Socialist who does not want these three things; Why do the socialists want to make their philosophy rigid by bringing in the question of social control which in practice must be State control? Let me tell you economic independence of some sort is of the essence of individuality. If you take away a man's economic independence you have taken away a good deal of his personality and there can be no democracy without individuality.

"I hope and pray that you will go out from this hall determined to do the right thing, right as you conceive it. You may accept my views or you reject them. That is immaterial. But I want you to think. I cannot expect to do in twenty minutes what Gandhi has not been able to do in twenty-six years. But I have poured out my heart before you because you have entrusted me with the heavy and the responsible task of guiding your counsels."

Proceedings of the All India Congress Committee

Meerut—November 21st. 1946

A meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held on November 21, 1946, at the Subjects Committee Pandal, Meerut, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the A. I. C. C. held at Delhi on September 23, 24, 1946 were placed by the General Secretary of the A. I. C. C. before the Committee and confirmed.

Shri Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar, the General Secretaries of the A. I. C. C. presented the audited accounts for the period ending 30th September, 1945 and the General Secretaries' Report covering a period of past six years to the A. I. C. C. These were unanimously adopted by the Committee.

Meerut—25th. November, 1946

Another meeting of the A. I. C. C. was held on November 25, 1946 at the Subjects Committee Pandal, Meerut. Acharya Kripalani presided. At this meeting, according to convention, the Congress President, Acharya J. B. Kripalani was to have announced the personnel of the new Working Committee. The Congress President, however, expressed regret that he was unable to make the announcement just then. He hoped to be able to make it in a day or two.

Shri Jai Prakash Narain proposed that a Committee be appointed to consider and draft principles governing the constitution of a free, independent India. The Committee considered the proposal and decided that a special meeting of the A. I. C. C. be called at an early date to consider the proposal and set up a Constitution Committee.

THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The A. I. C. C. appointed a committee to consider changes in the Congress constitution in terms of the resolution passed by the Meerut Congress. This Committee was the old Constitution Committee with some new names added to it. The following is the personnel of the new Committee.

(1) Dr. Rajendra Prasad. (2) Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. (3) Acharya Narendra Deo. (4) Shri R. R. Diwakar, (Convener). (5) Shri Jai Prakash Narain. (6) Shri Kamaladevi. (7) Shri Purushottamdas Tandon. (8) Shri Mridula Sarabhai. (9) Dr. B. V. Keskar. (10) Shri Srinivas Mallayya. (11) Shri S. K. Patil. (12) Shri Jairamdas Doulatram. (13) Shri Shanker Rao Deo. (14) Acharya Jugal Kishore.

NEXT SESSION OF THE CONGRESS

Invitations for holding the next session of the Congress received from Sindh, Andhra, Tamil Nad, and Kerala were placed before the A. I. C. C. It was decided to leave it to the Working Committee to consider the invitations and come to a decision.

Proceedings of the Working Committee

Delhi—December 8th. to 22nd. 1946.

A meeting of the Working Committee was held at Delhi from December 8 to December 22, 1946, Acharaya J. B. Kripalani presided. The members present were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sarojini Naidu, Sarat Chandra Bose, Rajagopalachariar, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Kamaladevi, Sardar Pratap Singh, Shankarrao Deo and Jugal Kishore.

Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Govind Ballabh Pant, Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Asaf Ali, Jagjivan Ram, Mridula Sarabhai and B. V. Keskar were present by special invitation.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the last meeting of the Working Committee held at New Delhi on 19th and 20th November and at Meerut on 21st and 22nd. November, 1945 were placed before the Committee and confirmed.

PRESIDENT OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Assembly was due to meet on December 9, 1946 at New Delhi. After transacting some formal business under the Chairmanship of a temporary Chairman it was required to elect its permanent President. It was the general feeling among Congress members of the Constituent Assembly that this high office should go to one who commanded universal respect. The Working Committee decided to recommend the name of Dr. Rajendra Prasad for permanent presidentship to the Congress Party of the Constituent Assembly. The Working Committee's recommendation was unanimously accepted by the Congress Party. The Constituent Assembly unanimously elected Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its permanent President.

PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

The Working Committee appointed a Parliamentary Sub-Committee of which the following are its members: (1) Acharya Kripalani, (2) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, (3) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, (4) Dr. Rajendra Prasad, (5) Shri Shankarrao Deo. Shri Sankerrao Deo was appointed as the Secretary of the Committee. It was decided that the office of the parliamentary sub-committee be located in the A. I. C. C. Office.

STATEMENT ON GOVT. PRONOUNCEMENT OF DEC. 6

The Working Committee considered the British Government's Statement of December 6 and subsequent pronouncement in the British Parliament and issued the following statement:

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the statement issued by the British Government on December 6, 1946, as well as other statements made recently on their behalf in Parliament. These statements, though made by way of interpretation and elucidation, are clearly additions to, and variations of, the British Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946, on which the whole scheme of the Constituent Assembly was based.

The statement of May 16, 1946, laid down in paragraph 15 as basic principles of the Constitution that "there should be a Union of India embracing both British India and the States", that "all subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces" and that "provinces should be free to form Groups."

The provinces were thus intended to be autonomous, subject to the Union controlling certain specified subjects. Paragraph 19 laid down, *inter alia*, the procedure for Sections to meet, for decisions to be taken as to whether Groups should be formed or not and for any province to elect to come out of the Group in which it might have been placed.

In their resolution of May 24, 1946, the Working Committee pointed out what appeared to be a divergence between the basic principles and the procedure suggested, in that a measure of compulsion was introduced which infringed the basic principles of provincial autonomy. The Cabinet Mission thereupon issued a statement on May 25, 1946, in which it was stated that "the interpretation, put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the statement, to the effect that the provinces can, in the first instance, make the choice whether or not to belong to the Section in which they are placed does not accord with the delegation's intentions. The reasons for the grouping of provinces are well known and this is an essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreement between the two parties." The point of issue was not merely one of procedure but the fundamental principle of provincial autonomy and whether or not a province or part should be coerced against its will.

The Congress made it clear later that their objection was not to provinces entering Sections but to compulsory grouping and the possibility of a dominating province framing a constitution for another province entirely against the wishes of the latter. This might result in the framing of rules, the regulation of franchise, electorates, constituencies for elections and the composition of the Legislature, which might seriously prejudice or even nullify the provision for a province subsequently to opt out of a Group. It was pointed out that this could never be the intention of the Cabinet Mission as it would be repugnant to the basic principles and policy of the scheme they had propounded. The Congress approach to the problem of constitution-making has all along been that coercion should not be exercised against any province or part of the country and that the constitution of free India should be drawn up with the co-operation and goodwill of all parties and provinces concerned.

In a letter dated 15th June, 1946, from Lord Wavell to Maulana Azad, the President of the Congress, it was stated that "delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would, however, point out that the statement of May 16 does not make grouping compulsory. It leaves the decision to the elected representatives of the provinces concerned, sitting together in Sections. The only provision which is made is that the representatives of certain provinces should meet in Sections so that they can decide whether or not they wish to form groups." Thus the principle which was emphasised again was that grouping was not compulsory and in regard to Sections a certain procedure was indicated. This procedure was not clear and could be interpreted in more than one way and in any event a point of procedure could not override a basic principle. We pointed out that the right interpretation should be one which did no violence to that principle. Further, in order to smooth the way to the co-operation of all concerned in the working of the proposed scheme we not only made it clear that we were prepared to go into the Sections, but also we suggested that if our interpretation was not accepted we would be agreeable to reference on this point to the Federal Court. It is well known that the proposal in regard to grouping affected injuriously two provinces especially, namely, Assam and the North West Frontier Province as well as the Sikhs in the Punjab. Their representatives expressed their strong disapproval of this proposal. In a letter to the Secretary of State dated 25th May, 1946, Master Tara Singh gave expression to the anxiety and apprehensions of the Sikhs and asked for clarification in regard to certain matters. The Secretary of State sent an answer to this letter on June 1, 1946, in the course of which he said: "I have considered carefully the detailed points you raise at the end of your letter. I fear the Mission cannot issue any additions to, or interpretation of the statement."

In spite of this explicit statement, the British Government have, on December 6, issued a statement which is both an addition to, and an interpretation of the statement of May 16, 1946. They have done so after more than six and a half months, during which period many developments have taken place as a consequence of the original statement. Throughout this period the position of the Congress was made repeatedly clear to the British Government or their representatives, and it was with full knowledge of this position that the British Government took subsequent steps in furtherance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals. That position was in conformity with the basic principles laid down in the statement of May 16, 1946, which statement the Congress had accepted in its entirety. Further, the Congress had expressed its willingness to refer, if necessity arose, the point of interpretation to the Federal Court, whose decision should be accepted by the parties concerned In the course of his letter dated June 28, 1946, addressed to Mr. Jinnah, the Viceroy stated that 'Congress had accepted the statement of May 16.' In the course of a broadcast on August 24, 1946, the Viceroy, in appealing to the Muslim League to co-operate, pointed out that the Congress are ready to agree that any dispute of interpretation may be referred to the Federal Court.

The Muslim League reversed its former decision and rejected the British Cabinet Mission's scheme by a formal resolution, and even decided to resort to direct action. Their spokesmen have since repeatedly challenged the very basis of that scheme, that is, the constitution of a Union of India, and have reverted to their demand for a partition of India. Even after the British Government's statement of December 6, 1946, the leaders of the Muslim League have reiterated this demand for partition and the establishment of two separate independent Governments in India.

When the invitation of the British Government was received by the Congress at the end of November last to send its representatives to London, the Congress position was clearly indicated again. It was on an assurance of the Prime Minister of Great Britain that a representative of the Congress proceeded to London.

In spite of this assurance and of previous assurances to the effect that no additions to, or interpretation of, the statement of May 16, 1946, were going to be made, the British Government have now issued a statement which clearly, in several respects, goes beyond the original statement, on the basis of which progress has been made till now.

The Working Committee deeply regret that the British Government should have acted in a manner which has not been in keeping with their own assurances, and which has created suspicion in the minds of large numbers of people of India. For some time past the attitude of the British Government and their representatives in India has been such as to add to the difficulties and complexities of the situation in the country. Their present intervention, long after the members of the Constituent Assembly had been elected, has created a new situation which is full of peril for the future. Because of this, the Working Committee have given anxious and prolonged thought to it.

The Congress seeks to frame, through the Constituent Assembly, a constitution of a free independent India with the willing co-operation of all elements of the Indian peoples. The Working Committee regret that Muslim League members of the Constituent Assembly have refrained from attending its opening session. The Committee, however, appreciate and express their gratification at the presence in the Constituent Assembly of representatives of all other interests and sections of the people of India, and note with pleasure the spirit of co-operation in a common task and a high endeavour which has been in evidence during the sessions of the Assembly. The committee will continue their efforts to make the Constituent Assembly fully representative of all the people of India and trust that members of the Muslim League will give their co-operation in this great task. In order to achieve this, the Committee have advised Congress representatives in the Assembly to postpone consideration of important issues to a subsequent meeting.

In their statement of December 6, 1946, the British Government, in giving their interpretation of a doubtful point of procedure, have referred to it as a "fundamental point", and suggested that the Constituent Assembly may refer it to the Federal Court at a very early date. Subsequent statements made on behalf of the British Government have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept the decision of this Court should it go against their own interpretation. On behalf of the Muslim League also it has been stated that they will not be bound by the decision of the Federal Court, and a demand for the partition of India, which is a negation of the Cabinet Mission's scheme, continues to be put forward. While the Congress has always been willing to agree to a reference to the Federal Court, any reference now, when none of the other parties are prepared to join in it or to accept it, and one of them does not even accept the basis of the scheme, becomes totally uncalled for and unbecoming, and unsuited to the dignity of either the Congress or the Federal Court. By their repeated statements, British statesmen have ruled this out.

The Working Committee are still of the opinion that the interpretation put by the British Government in regard to the method of voting in the Sections is not in conformity with provincial autonomy, which is one of the fundamental bases of the scheme proposed in the statement of May 16. The Committee are anxious to avoid anything that may come in the way of the successful working of the Constituent Assembly, and are prepared to do everything in their power to seek and obtain the largest measure of co-operation, provided that no fundamental principle is violated. In view of the importance and urgency of the issues facing the country and the far-reaching consequences which must follow any decisions, the Working Committee are convening an emergent meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Delhi early in January to consider the latest development and to give such directions as it may deem fit.

THE NEW WORKING COMMITTEE

On the 28th November 1946 the Congress President Acharya J. B. Kripalani issued the following statement announcing the personnel of the new Working Committee :

Under Article XX of the Congress Constitution, I invite the following friends to work as my colleagues on the Working Committee:

(1) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
(2) Shri Jawaharlal Nehru
(3) Shri Vallabhbhai Patel
(4) Smt. Sarojini Naidu
(5) Shri Rajendra Prasad
(6) Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan
(7) Shri Sarat Chandra Bose
(8) Shri Rajagopalachariar
(9) Shri Shankarrao Deo
(10) Smt. Kamala Devi
(11) Shri Rafi Ahmed Kidwai
(12) Shri Jai Prakash Narain
(13) Shri Pratap Singh
(14) Shri Jugal Kishore (U. P.).

Shri Shankarrao Deo and Acharya Jugal Kishore will be the General Secretaries, and Shri Vallabhbhai Patel will continue as the Treasurer.

Convention required me to announce the personnel of the Working Committee on the 25th last in the A. I. C. C. meeting. I am sorry I could not do this. The reason is obvious. If my distinguished predecessors found the task of selecting their colleagues difficult, I have found it much more so. They had in this unenviable task the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, of which his absence has deprived me. My difficulties were further enhanced by the fact that my predecessor in office Shri Jawaharlal Nehru had infused considerable new blood in the Committee. Jawaharlalji is a great leader. He can instruct and guide. With his personality and prestige, he can shoulder the responsibility of his colleagues and, if need be, stand alone. I have not all these advantages. I can feel secure only with old and tried colleagues. Yet I was loath to undo what my predecessor had done so recently. Therefore in selecting names I have made the fewest possible changes.

I had also to keep in mind the fact that it was the wish of the A. I. C. C. that not more than a third of the personnel of the Working Committee should consist of those who are holding Government Offices as members of the Central and Provincial Cabinets. This last fact has obliged me to drop from the list the name of Shri Govind Ballabh Pant whose contribution to the deliberations of our committee has always been great. He has been our colleague for many years. Even though his name is not included in the present list, I have no doubt that the committee will always have the benefit of his cooperation and advice.

I would have much liked to include my old colleague Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya in the list. But friends from the South were not united in their preference and the choice before me was limited. However, Dr. Pattabhi's advice and cooperation will, I am sure, be with us as usual.

In the last 48 hours I have been flooded with telegrams from the South giving me unsought advice. This kind of canvassing for or against membership of the Working Committee is novel in Congress history. It must be discouraged if we have to maintain the dignity of our organisation.

The times are anxious. They require the utmost patience and caution as also courage. I am sure the new team will not lack these qualities and will so work as would add to the credit of our organisation and the glory of our nation —BANDE MATARAM

Congress Acceptance of Long Term plan

Debate in the All India Congress Committee

Bombay—6th and 7th July 1946

MAULANA AZAD'S SPEECH

The All-India Congress Committee began its two-day session at Bombay on the 6th and 7th July 1946 to ratify the Working Committee's resolution passed at Delhi on June 26, and accept the Cabinet Mission's. proposals to summon a Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free and independent India and rejecting the interim Government proposal,

After *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad*, the retiring President, had addressed the Committee, reviewing events since the last meeting of the A. I. C. C. in September, 1945, *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*, the President-elect, took the chair.

Moving the Working Committee's resolution, Maulana Azad said that for many years the Congress had been pressing for India's right to decide her own future and to frame her own constitution. In accepting the long-term proposals there had been no compromise whatsoever on the fundamental ideals of the Congress—complete independence and unity of the country. In negotiations carried on with the Cabinet Mission he had been given the assurance that the independence of India was no longer in dispute.

Maulana Azad in his valedictory speech, said: "We are on the threshold of our freedom. Our freedom is coming not because of international changes but because of the revolution that has taken place in our own country resulting in a great national awakening.

"The new A. I. C. C. which has just assembled contains new blood and fresh minds. I am glad to welcome the new members as new blood always gives fresh vigour and strength. This meeting of the new A. I. C. C. should have been held along with the plenary session of the Congress, but owing to abnormal conditions we have been unable to hold the annual session Now that a new A. I. C. C. has been elected I have decided to hand over the reins of office of the Congress President to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to allow the work of the Congress to be carried on uninterrupted, though the annual sssion itself may not be held for some time.

"When I took charge of the office of the Congress President at the Ramgarh Congress six years ago, we were struggling for our freedom. But today, when I lay down the reins of office, I am happy to find that the question is no longer one of fighting for our freedom, as we are already on the threshold of freedom, but of working out the freedom that is coming. Only one further step is required for us to reach our goal."

Maulana Azad then referred to the criticism that the Working Committee had not consulted the A. I. C. C. earlier in connexion with the constitutional negotiations, and said that the criticism was wrong for the reason that as soon as definite conclusions were reached the Working Committee lost no time in summoning the A. I. C. C. to get its stamp of approval on the decisions taken by the Working Committee.

Maulana Azad urged the Committee to consider the results of the Working Committee's negotiations with the Cabinet Mission dispassionately and see if the Working Committee had not discharged its responsibilities in the best interests of the country.

He then asked Pandit Nehru to occupy the chair.

Paying tribute to Maulana Azad's work *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel* said: "The credit for bringing us to the present position in our struggle for our independence goes entirely to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. We asked the British to quit India in 1942. They have now told us that they are ready to quit. We are now discussing the ways and means of their quitting and how to make it smooth and easy. Maulana Azad deserves all praise for this great achievement."

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant said that Maulana Azad had piloted the Congress with great dignity, honour and astuteness.

PANDIT NEHRU'S SPEECH

Pandit Nehru said: "Who is there amongst us who can follow in Maulana Azad's footsteps and carry the burden with the same ability and courage as he did? As for myself, I was for a long time unable to make up my mind whether to accept the responsibility of Presidentship now or not. But day before yesterday I persuaded myself to shoulder the responsibility on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi and also my colleagues on the Working Committee.

"We now stand at the door-step of our freedom. Only one push is required to enable us to reach our cherished goal. In every country great changes are taking place. The Presidentship of the Congress is as heavy and arduous as any high office in the world. It may not be possible for one single individual to become the President of the Congress and carry on his duties conscientiously, but with the help of my colleagues. I feel confident to be able to carry the great burden which the Maulana Saheb has put on me.

"The question before us is not whether we should ratify or reject any one particular resolution. It is not merely a question of the merits and de-merits of the proposed Constituent Assembly. It is the vital question of the freedom of India. During the last 25 years millions of people have faithfully followed the Congress in the hope and belief of achieving our national independence. Today the Congress is more powerful than ever before, but I must also admit that there is much internal weakness in the Congress of today. The Congress is a platform for all shades of groups and parties to work for the common goal of India's freedom.

"We must see that our internal weaknesses do not come in the way of our main objective, namely, the independence of India. We must eliminate these weaknesses, as we are engaged in the most difficult task of ending British imperialism in India. In this task we require the complete unity and strength of the people behind us.

"The British regime in India is beginning to end. The curtain is now being rung down. This is a very delicate moment when we should muster all our strength and show no weakness. We have, therefore, to shake off all symptoms of weakness. We must be prepared to face problems as they arise. We can do this only if we are united and strong. In India we are today faced with grave economic problems. We are faced with a famine. In South Africa our honour is assailed. There is rampant racial discrimination against our nationals. In Ceylon, which is really a part of India, though legally and constitutionally it may not be so, we are having a difficult situation."

Referring to the international situation, Pandit Nehru said : "The world is today being torn asunder. Whatever is happening today has nothing to do with the war that is already over. The question is, when will the next war be? India has always stood for the ideal of freedom. We are against Fascism and Nazism. We cannot, therefore, be a willing party to any one country depriving of freedom another country, big or small. We shall uphold the right of every country for freedom.

"The Indian National Congress today has attained a position, not only in the eyes of our own people but in the eyes of the people of the world. When we attain our freedom, which is not far off, and establish friendly relations with other countries, we will not only have to consider our own problems but also those of other countries, for they will vitally affect us."

THE DELHI RESOLUTION

The Delhi Resolution of the Working Committee reads as follows : "On May 24 the Working Committee passed a resolution on the statement dated May 16 issued by the British Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy. In this resolution they pointed out some defects in the statement and gave their own interpretation of certain parts of it.

"Since then the Committee have been continuously engaged in giving earnest consideration to the proposals made on behalf of the British Government in the statements of May 16 and June 15 and have considered the correspondence in regard to them between the Congress President and the members of the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy.

"The Committee have examined both these sets of proposals from the point of view of the Congress objective of immediate independence and the opening out of the avenues leading to the rapid advance of the masses, economically and socially, so that their material standards may be raised and poverty, malnutrition, famine and the lack of the necessaries of life may be ended, and all the people of the country may have the freedom and opportunity to grow and develop according to their genius. These proposals fall short of these objectives Yet the Committee considered them earnestly in all their aspects because of their desire to find some way for the peaceful settlement of India's problem and the ending of the conflict between India and England.

"The kind of independence Congress has aimed at is the establishment of a united democratic Indian Federation, with a Central authority, which would command respect from the nations of the world, maximum provincial autonomy, and equal rights for all men and women in the country. The limitation of the Central authority as contained in the proposals, as well as the system of grouping of provinces, weakened the whole structure and was unfair to some provinces such as the N. W. F. P. and Assam, and to some of the minorities, notably the Sikhs. The Committee disapproved of this. They felt, however, that, taking the proposals as a whole, there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the Central authority and for fully ensuring the right of a province to act according to its choice in regard to grouping, and to give protection to such minorities as might otherwise be placed at a disadvantage.

"Certain other objections were also raised on their behalf, notably the possibility of non-nationals taking any part in constitution-making. It is clear that it would be a breach of both the letter and spirit of the statement of May 16 if any non-Indian participated in voting or stands for election to the Constituent Assembly.

"In the proposals for an Interim Government contained in the statement of June 16 the defects related to matters of vital concern to the Congress. Some of these have been pointed out in the letter, dated June 25, of the Congress President to the Viceroy. The Provisional Government must have power and authority and responsibility and should function in fact, if not in law, as a de facto independent Government leading to the full independence to come. The members of such a Government can only hold themselves responsible to the people and not to any external authority.

"In the formation of a provisional or other Government, Congressmen can never give up the national character of the Congress, or accept an artificial and unjust party, or agree to the veto of a communal group. The Committee are unable to accept the proposals for the formation of an Interim Government as contained in the statement of June 16.

"The Committee have, however, decided that the Congress should join the proposed Constituent Assembly, with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India.

"While the Committee have agreed to Congress participation in the Constituent Assembly, it is in their opinion essential that a representative and responsible provisional national Government be formed at the earliest possible date. A continuation of authoritarian and unrepresentative Government can only add to the suffering of famishing masses and increase discontent. It will also put in jeopardy the work of the Constituent Assembly, which can only function in a free environment.

"The Working Committee recommend, accordingly, for the purpose of considering and ratifying this recommendation, an emergency meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay on July 6 and 7."

AZAD EXPLAINS PROPOSALS

Commending the resolution to the House for its acceptance, *Maulana Azad* said : "The way the discussion on the Working Committee's resolution has been going on in the country makes me feel that the people seem to have forgotten the question the Working Committee was faced with. The Committee had either to accept or reject certain proposals placed before it. It had to be guided by what the Congress had been demanding all these years. The Congress had demanded that India must have the right to chalk out her own future and frame her own constitution. For many years the British Government were not prepared to accept this demand of the Congress to allow Indians to frame their own constitution. But circumstances had now forced the British Government to agree to India's fundamental demand of summoning a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of framing a constitution for a free and independent India.

"The Cabinet Mission's proposal contained in the State Paper issued on May 16, gave us this right to summon a Constituent Assembly to frame our own constitution. This is what we have been demanding all these years. What will be our position if we refuse that offer ? If we refused the offer, then there would be no meaning to our demands. The things that we have been asking for years has been accepted and we have now to work our own way. Therefore, the Committee had no choice. It had to accept the offer so long as the Committee felt convinced that it would lead the country to the end the Congress had before it.

"The plan envisaged by the Cabinet Mission in their White Paper of May 16, consists of two aspects, political and communal. As far as the political implications of the proposals are concerned, the proposals make it clear that the Constituent Assembly will have the fullest rights to frame a constitution for a free and independent India and such a constitution will be accepted by the British Government. We have been given the freedom to decide whether we wish to remain within the British Empire or be completely independent. It is for us to decide this vital question and the British Government does not wish to dictate to us in this respect as they have hitherto been doing.

"In my first interview with the Cabinet Mission, I made it absolutely clear to the delegation that the Constituent Assembly we wished to summon should have unfettered freedom to frame a constitution for a free and independent India. The British Government has accepted this demand and has made it clear that the freedom of India is not under question and it has been granted without any question. When then should we raise doubts in the face of such unequivocal declarations by the British Government ?

"The Cabinet Mission's proposals also have once and for all time cleared all doubts about the question of the division of India. These proposals have made it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that India shall remain an undivided single unit with a strong Central Government composed of the federating units.

"Our main demands having thus been accepted by the Cabinet Mission, you will agree the Working Committee had to accept the proposals after pointing out the defects in them. This is what the Working Committee has done by its resolution of June 26. My answer to those critics who say that we should not have accepted this proposal is that if we rejected this proposal now, it may not be possible at a later date in the future to secure a proposal acceptable to us.

"For some time now the Congress had been convinced that a completely unitary form of Central Government was unsuited for India as it is impracticable. The Congress had also felt convinced that a division of India as demanded by the Muslim League would prove disastrous to the country. The Congress had therefore, decided to pursue a middle course. That is the reason the Congress recommended a federal form at the Centre, with maximum autonomy to the federating units including residuary powers. This helps to keep India undivided, at the same time ensuring utmost autonomy to the units to develop themselves individually and freely to the maximum extent.

"We placed this proposal before the Cabinet Mission which accepted this proposal in principle and produced a scheme with a united Centre with limited powers such as controlling defence, foreign affairs and communications and finance to the extent needed to maintain the stability of the Union Centre. The Constituent Assembly could now find ways and means of strengthening the Union Centre by conceding to the Centre sufficient powers to levy enough finances to support itself and maintain an efficient defence force to protect the country from external aggression and internal turmoil.

"The only new feature of the Cabinet Mission's proposals to which the Congress had not agreed fully was the one relating to grouping. The Working Committee has, therefore, made it clear that there should be no compulsion in the matter of grouping. The provinces should be free to decide whether they wish to join a particular group or not. We are confident that the interpretation we have put on the grouping clause is the correct interpretation.

"The Congress Working Committee has made it clear that it cannot agree to the Europeans of Bengal and Assam participating in the framing of the Constitution either by being members of the Constituent Assembly or participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly by voting. If the Europeans eventually decide to exercise their so called right of voting in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, then the Congress will have to reconsider its decision."

Maulana Azad welcomed the decision of Bengal Europeans not to exercise their right of vote and hoped that Assam Europeans would do likewise.

SARDAR PATEL'S SPEECH

Sardar Patel, seconding the resolution, said that the resolution covered two statements by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy of May 16 and June 16. The Working Committee had accepted the Mission's proposals contained in their statement of May 16, but rejected the Interim Government proposal contained in their statement of June 16.

Making it clear that the resolution moved by Maulana Azad could not be amended in any manner, Sardar Patel said: "We place this resolution before the House for ratification. Either you accept it or reject it in toto.

"Four parties, the Cabinet Mission, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Indian Princes have accepted the constitutional plan envisaged in the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission on May 16. All vital details connected with the negotiations have been fully published. You are aware the Muslim League first accepted the May 16 statement of the Cabinet Mission. We deferred our decision until the full picture was available to us, namely, of the Constituent Assembly and the Interim Government. The Interim Government plan was published in the statement of the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on June 16. We decided to reject this proposal as it did not accord with our demands. We however, decided to accept the Constituent Assembly scheme contained in the statement of May 16. We have made it clear to the Cabinet Mission that the proposed Constituent Assembly will not prove a success if a responsible representative Provisional Government at the Centre is not established soon. They have made it clear that the Caretaker Government will be there only for a few days."

"Consistent with the existing circumstances we have secured the widest franchise possible for the election to the Constituent Assembly. The most dangerous proposal in the Constituent Assembly scheme is the one relating to grouping. Our interpretation of the relevant paragraph in the State Paper is that the provinces are free to decide at the initial stage whether they wish to join a particular group in which they have been placed. No province can be compelled to join any group against its own wishes.

"The difficulty about Europeans participating in the voting to the Constituent Assembly election has been practically overcome. We have thus secured a Constituent Assembly almost on the lines we have demanded all these years. Furthermore, under the proposed scheme, the transfer of power from British to Indian hands will be smooth and peaceful. It is therefore our conviction that we should take advantage of the scheme and not plunge the country in a struggle.

"At the very commencement of our negotiations with the Cabinet Mission we made it clear to them that we could talk to them only on the basis of a free and independent India. The British Mission accepted this and made it clear that their acceptance of our demand was without any reservation. In the face of such assurance it is difficult for us not to believe them.

"Wh have also made sure that there shall be one undivided India with one Central Government. What the shape of that Central Government will be, is a matter for the Constituent Assembly to decide. The Muslim League sees the germs of Pakistan in the scheme. We see a united India. It is for the Constituent Assembly to decide who is right."

Referring to the "great injustice done to the great Sikh community" in the Cabinet Mission's proposals, he said that the Sikhs had not been consulted before they "were thrown, bound hand and foot" into the B group. The speaker could not see any reason why the Sikhs were not given the same safeguards and communal veto as had been given to the Muslims. He was opposed to all vetoes but once such a veto had been given to the Muslims he could not see the reason why it was refused in the case of the Sikhs.

Referring to the Indian States. Sardar Patel welcomed the Mission's statement saying that once India was independent there would be no further paramountcy. The Cabinet Mission's statement had made it clear that in future the States' rulers would have to look more and more to their own subjects rather than to the Paramount Power, if they are to progress. The question of representation in the Constituent Assembly of States people had not been decided, but he hoped that the Indian Princes would provide adequate representation for their people in the Constituent Asssmbly.

The House at this stage adjourned for tea.

AMENDMENTS RULED OUT

On resumption. *Pandit Nehru* read out a number of amendments given notice of by members. He said all of them were irrelevant and ruled them out of order. He then called upon those who had sought to move amendments to speak on the resolution.

Mr. *Ansar Harwani*, who wanted to move an amendment seeking total rejection, started the debate by attacking the Working Committee's decision. Calling upon the A. I. C. C. to reject the British Government's proposal, Mr. Harwani said that the Constituent Assembly envisaged in the British plan was not going to be on the basis of adult franchise but on restricted franchise based on separate electorates. Such a Constituent Assembly could not bring the freedom for which the Congress had been fighting during the last 25 years. If the proposals were accepted, the Congress would be playing into the hands of British imperialism. The proposed Constituent Assembly was a far cry from the "do or die" slogan of 1942.

Mr. *Jaiprakash Narain*, Leader of the Congress Socialist Party, led tha Left-wing opposition to the Congress Working Committee's decision. Opposing the resolution, he said that the proposed Constituent Assembly which was being brought into existence by the British in India was not going to bring the swaraj for the people of India for which the Congress had been fighting all these years.

The 'Quit India" movement of 1942 had been launched to rid India of British imperial power, but that struggle did not achieve its end though it released new forces which had taken the country far towards its goal. The question today before the country was not whether to accept the so-called Constituent Assembly scheme sponsored by British imperialism but how to utilize the new force to drive the British out of India.

The British Cabinet Mission, he said, had not come to deliver freedom to India but to play the mediator between the Congress and the Muslim League. The British had created the so-called differences and they were still trying to exploit them. The Muslim League may have a large following among Muslims of India today but the League was still the ally and friend of the British. The Cabinet Mission was asking the Congress to swallow its principles and compromise with the League whose leader in 1942 declared that the "Quit India" movement was not against the British but against the Muslims to perpetuate Hindu domination. How could the Congress settle with such a leader?

"I feel confident the Congress can break the League's hold on the Muslims by its going direct to the Muslim masses. Instead of making this direct approach, we are trying to negotiate with the leaders of the League whom we know to be the friends of our enemies. I an glad the Working Committee has turned down the proposal for the Interim Government.

I feel that the acceptance of the Constituent Assembly scheme also fore-shadows danger. The Constituent Assembly proposed by the British is far from our original idea which was given to us by Pandit Nehru. This Constituent Assembly is the creation of the British and it can never bring us the freedom that we have been fighting for. Whenever a difference of opinion arises between the Congress and the League in the Constituent Assembly, and differences are bound to arise, then we have to go to the British Government for a solution. And do you think we can expect fairplay from the British in such a situation? If on the contrary the Constituent Assembly is the outcome of the strength of the people we can solve all our difficulties by an appeal to our people.

I am aware that all these and other defects must have been considered by the Working Committee before it came to the final decision it has. But I see no reason why he should accept such a defective proposal, knowing the pitfalls in advance and also knowing our own real strength. Any Constituent Assembly can succeed only if it works in a free atmosphere and there can be no free atmosphere in India so long as British power remains and British troops continue to be stationed in India.

The only thing we can do is to tell the British Government that we do not want such a restricted and curbed Constituent Assembly. We shall weaken ourselves if we accept the British Government's proposals. The acceptance of office in the provinces has weakened us considerably. If we accept these proposals we shall further weaken ourselves.

The course of negotiations adopted by the Working Committee in my opinion has not led us to our goal. Why then should we not abandon such negotiations and prepare for another struggle? There is only one way open to us and that is to strengthen the Congress organization and when we are sure of our own inherent strength start a fight with the British Government, compel them to quit India and make them understand that they have to transfer power and that can be done only by negotiating with the Congress.

"I wish to make it clear that I am not opposing the Working Committee's decision merely to discredit the Working Committee, but I honestly feel that the decision of the Working Committee is wrong and therefore it should not be approved. The AICC has a chance of righting that mistake and the opportunity should not be missed."

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati from Bihar, opposed the Working Committee's resolution and endorsed every word of what Mr. Jaiprakash Narain had said against the Working Committee's decision. In his opinion the Constituent Assembly would be a powerless instrument as it had already been restricted, curbed and bound hand and foot. In fact it was a carcase. The speaker doubted if an Interim Government would be formed after the Constituent Assembly came into being. The attempt of the British Government was to make the world feel that the Congress was a Hindu body and that the Muslim League alone represents all the Muslims of India. Grouping of provinces in his opinion amounted to laying the foundation-stone of Pakistan. Grouping cut aganst the vitals of a united India. The Congress should make the British Government realize that such hotch-potch proposals could not succeed and that they should negotiate for a settlement with the Congress as that was the only body which represented the masses of India.

The speaker predicted that at the very initial stage the Constituent Assembly would be faced with a deadlock and the British Government would be requested to intervene.

Mr. *R. K. Sidhwa*, from Sind, was the first member to support the Congress High Command's resolution. He said that there might be some justification in the criticism that the Congress had not got all that it wanted, but they had to consider that in all negotiations there would have to be give and take.

Mr. *Munshi Ahmeduddin* (Punjab), opposing the resolution said the Constituent Assembly had been constituted in such a way that it would not be able to frame a democratic and free constitution for India. "How can the Congress, which stands for freedom and progress, work with reactionary representatives of the Muslim League and the Indian Princes?" He asked.

He did not doubt the sincerity of purpose of the Working Committee's intentions, but he was sceptical of the results. The speaker was afraid that by participating in the Constituent Assembly, the Congress would be frittering away the strength which it had taken years to build up.

Mr. *Mahabir Thyagi* (U.P.) supported the resolution. He said the Working Committee consisted of great political minds and the members knew the real needs of the people. The Committee had considered the pros and cons of the acceptance of the British proposals before coming to final conclusions.

Rao Saheb Patwardhan (Ahmadnagar), opposing the resolution, said the British diplomats had hoodwinked the Working Committee.

Prof. *Ranga* (Andhra), supporting the resolution, congratulated the Working Committee on the great statesmanship they had displayed. "The British have now accepted Mr. Gandhi's slogan of 'quit India' and are actually preparing to quit. The British Government, which till recently refused to give up paramountcy over Indian States, have been forced publicly to declare that paramountcy has to go and the Indian Princes have to make up with Indian nationalism and Indian patriots. Mr. Jinnah had asked for Pakistan and British imperialism had always supported him. But today British statesmen have said that Pakistan is an untenable proposition. On these great triumphs we should be able to put up a realistic structure for the freedom of India.

The Congress has not abandoned a single one of its principles. The Congress has made it perfectly clear that it is entering the Constituent Assembly with its own interpretation of the grouping clause. If the Assembly fails the Congress High Command will give the lead to the country to start another struggle. Then will be time for all of us to do our duty.

The Committee at this stage adjourned for the day.

Second Day—Bombay—7th. July 1946

Mahatma Gandhi's Speech

Mahatma Gandhi addressed the AICC to-day for an hour. In an impassioned speech he called upon Congressmen to give a fair and full trial to the Constituent Assembly scheme and make the best out of it. He had no doubt that if the task was properly approached they could produce a 'swadeshi constitution for India.'

Some people talked of the British deceiving the people of India and the Congress. He, as a true satyagrahi, did not believe that anyone, not even the British, could deceive true satyagrahis.

M. Gandhi said that he had no right to speak at the AICC, for he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress, but he had been invited to speak by the Working Committee and with their permission he would like to speak on two important subjects, first, on the resolution moved by Maulana Azad, seeking ratification of the Working Committee's resolution and secondly, on the resolution on the satyagraha movement in South Africa.

M. Gandhi said: "I have not yet come across a single man who can give perfect expression to all his ideas passing through his mind. It is, therefore, necessary for one to think before he speaks, but on this occasion I have had no time to think about the speech I should make, but in spite of this defect I have agreed to speak.

I have read many things in the newspapers about the recent Delhi negotiations. My advice to you is not to take these reports as gospel truth. Newspaper reports have very often been highly coloured. I do not, therefore, think that you will lose much if you did not read these reports.

I said in one of my speeches at Delhi that I saw darkness all around me. I told the Working Committee that as I could not see light I could not advise them. At the same time I made it clear to the Working Committee that I was not prepared to advise them to throw out or reject the British Delegation's proposals for summoning a Constituent Assembly. I asked the Working Committee to use their judgment and come to their own conclusions. Though I could not see light I, in my own mind, favoured acceptance of the proposal but advised the Working Committee to come to their own decision independently of what I felt or said.

My mind today is dark as it was in Delhi. Therefore, I will give the same advice to Sj. Jaiprakash Narain. I want you to accept or reject this resolution not because I ask you to accept it or Sj. Jaiprakash Narain asks you to reject it or the Working Committee wants you to accept it, but after giving full and careful thought to the proposition yourselves, I want you to exercise your own judgment and come to a final decision on your own.

The proposed Constituent Assembly, I know, is not a free Assembly. There are many defects in the scheme, but since we have been fighting for the last so many years, why should we be afraid of the defects in the Constituent Assembly scheme. We can fight the Constituent Assembly itself if we find the defects are unremediable.

As true satyagrahis and fighters, we have no right to be afraid of any hardships or difficulties in our way. I was, therefore, surprised when I heard Sj. Jaiprakash Narain saying yesterday that it is dangerous and useless to go into the Constituent Assembly. Supposing we go into the Constituent Assembly and lose, why should we be afraid? A true satyagrahi never thinks in terms of losing. No one can defeat him. He can never be deceived or cheated by anyone.

"As satyagrahis we have no right to say that the British are dishonest. How can we say that? There are good and bad people in all countries. We quarrelled among ourselves in the past and therefore, the British who came as traders to this country established themselves as our rulers. We have been fighting them as our rulers, not because the British people are dishonest or bad, but because they have no right to rule over us. They have now told us that they are ready to quit. Our task now is to see how their quitting can be smooth and peaceful."

1942 STRUGGLE

M. Gandhi referred to the 1942 struggle and said that many things which did not form part of the Congress programme, such as underground activities, cutting of telegraph wires and removal of rails, happened. In doing these things the people showed great courage and bravery, but in his opinion this was a wrong way of showing bravery.

These things are not going to carry us any nearer our goal. If non-violence is abandoned, it will not take us any farther on our road to freedom. We have had violent revolutionary activities in the past, but they have not carried us any farther on our road. True non-violence alone can take us to our goal.

I agree there has been a great awakening in this country, but I am, as a true satyagrahi, anxious to prevent such awakening resulting in derailment of trains and other forms of violence. I am anxious to utilize all the new awakening to speed our march to freedom. The time for rest and ease has not yet come. We have still to go through difficulties and put up with discomforts, I am sure we are still capable of going through difficulties and therefore, I do not see any reason why we should be afraid of going into the Constituent Assembly.

PLEA FOR ACCEPTANCE

I know that there are many defects in the Constituent Assembly scheme, but then it is in your power to improve it or to bury it. The Constituent Assembly scheme looks like iron ore. We can convert it into pure gold by our own efforts. Whatever loopholes there are can be remedied. My advice to you is to accept the scheme even in spite of its defects, for as satyagrahis, we have no reason to be afraid of anything. I feel that the scheme is capable of improvement and therefore, my urge is in favour of its acceptance.

We have asked the British to quit India. This does not mean that we wish to ill-treat them. We want the British to quit honourably and smoothly. The Constituent Assembly proposal is to enable us to make the British quit India. I therefore, feel that we should accept the Constituent Assembly scheme in spite of its defects, as we are competent to remedy the defects. I know it is a British-sponsored scheme, but have not the British openly stated that they have done this with an open mind and without any reservation to enable Indians to frame their own constitution for a free and independent India?

SOUTH AFRICA

Continuing M. Gandhi referred to the draft resolution on the satyagraha movement now being carried on by Indians in South Africa. He said that Indians in South Africa are being ill-treated not because they are not whites but because they are considered as coolies. Indians in South Africa speak English and many of them are professionals, like doctors and lawyers. In spite of all this, the South African whites look upon them as coolies and call them as such. The Indians, of course, are in a minority and yet they are putting up a brave fight. They have no swords or guns but they are determined to resist the anti-Indian laws by soul force, which is the only force available to satyagrahis. Durban owes its present prosperity to the Indians. The South African whites have agreed to give the Indians votes though not as equals but as inferiors.

The white civilization in South Africa could not be kept live by such means. Mahatma Gandhi wondered how a brave man like FM Smuts, who had praised Indians so much in the past, could be instrumental in taking steps to deprive Indians of their elementary rights.

When the debate on the resolution regarding the Constituent Assembly was resumed today, the first speaker was Mr. *S. C. Misra* (Bihar), who opposing the resolution, said that the Group constitutions provided in the State Paper would hinder the natural growth and progress of India. The Muslim League would do its utmost to see that Group constitutions were established, however much individual provinces might resist such an attempt. In the B and C Groups it would be the Muslim League which would have a majority and the provinces compulsorily brought into these Groups would have no opportunity of making their voice heard. Assam, for instance, would be the worst sufferer. It might so happen that it would not be possible for any Congress Ministry to come into power in future in Assam, once the Group constitution was drawn up.

Mr. *Tarapada Lahiri*, opposing the resolution, said that the decision of the Congress Working Committee, instead of advancing the cause of the country's progress, had put the hands of the clock back. In his opinion, the Working Committee's decision to accept part of the Cabinet Mission's proposals and reject the other part was bad. No progress, he said, could be made without a Provisional Government, adding that the Working Committee themselves had admitted this fact.

Mr. *Jagatnarain Lal*, from Bihar, supported the resolution subject to the Congress sticking to its interpretation of the clause relating to grouping and opposing parity of any kind or form in the Provisional Interim Government.

Mr. *Achyut Patwardhan*, from Ahmednagar, and a Socialist leader, opposed the resolution. Mr. Attlee had said, he declared, that the temperature of 1920 or even 1942 was not that of 1946.

"I want to know where these sentiments are reflected in the Cabinet Mission's proposals. In my view there have been no great advance in the proposals which we are called upon to accept from the Cripps proposals which we firmly rejected. Have we at least been able to remedy the defects in the Cripps proposals ?"

Referring to grouping Mr. Patwardhan asked how the Congress, once having agreed to enter the Constituent Assembly, could say that it did not wish to participate in grouping. The Congress Working Committee had said that they had accepted the clause relating to grouping with their own interpretation. Mr. Jinnah had his own interpretation which was opposed to the interpretation of the Congress. The correspondence published so far does not contain any evidence of the Cabinet Delegation accepting the Congress interpretation of the grouping clause. On the contrary, the Cabinet Mission had made it clear that the Congress interpretation of the clause was not in accord with the intentions of the Cabinet Mission.

Dealing with the proposed Union Government suggested in the long-term plan of the Cabinet Mission. Mr. Patwardhan said that the subjects allotted to the Centre clearly left out finances and economic policy. No Government could be strong unless it had power over the purse and could co-ordinate and direct the economic policy of the whole country.

Mr. Patwardhan made it clear that his opposition to the grouping clause was not because it helped the Muslim League, but because behind the grouping proposal was the Clive Street European capitalist. Clive Street interests had exploited the country all these years and under the new proposal also they would continue their exploitation.

"The British," he declared, "tell us that they are ready to quit, but they have not told us that the vested interests they have created in this country during the last 150 years will also quit.

"Once we enter the Constituent Assembly, I am sure we will be engrossed in quarrel after quarrel and we shall not be able to do any real work. The British scheme has made sure that there are sufficient seeds of internal quarrels. He appealed to the House to reject the resolution.

Mr. *Fakir Khan Sarhadi*, from the North West Frontier Province, supporting the resolution, said that people of his province were opposed to the compulsory grouping clause in the proposals.

"We do not want anything to happen against our own wishes", he said. "Some had suggested we should reject the proposals. If we did this, we would be playing into the hands of our enemies. The British would immediately start a campaign saying that in spite of the offers made by the Cabinet Mission to 'summon a Constituent Assembly, the Congress had rejected the scheme and therefore, it was impossible to deal with the Congress. The best thing is to go into the Constituent Assembly and see how we can advance our cause. If we do not like what happens, then we can break with the Constituent Assembly and thus demonstrate to the world that British intentions were not honest. We are strong and we can overcome any difficulties in our way."

Sreemati Ramdulari Devi opposed the resolution. She said that the Working Committee knew all the defects in the long-term proposal of the Cabinet Mission. Without removing these defects, the Committee had accepted the proposal, She was glad to note that the Committee had rejected the interim Government plan. It was foolish to depend upon the honest intentions of the British Government. They had deceived India in the past many times and they would do so again. She was astonished how the Working Committee took on itself the responsibility of accepting proposals without consulting the All-India Congress Committee.

Mrs *Aruna Asaf Ali*, opposing the resolution, said that the policy of the Working Committee since the release of its members had been out of tune with the spirit of the "Quit India" resolution. British power could only be overcome by a physical struggle and not by parleys and negotiations. Power to the people must come through their own struggle. If a referendum was taken today, people would resent the present policy of the Congress High Command as it was one of co-operation with the British. Congress acceptance of the Constituent Assembly scheme was a triumph for British post-war political plans.

Addressing Mahatma Gandhi, the speaker said: "We have listened to you and obeyed you all these years. You must now listen to us and it is your duty to obey us."

Mr. *N. V. Gadgil* of Poona, supporting the resolution, said the Working Committee had not compromised on any principle. The Working Committee, he declared, had succeeded for the first time in getting Mr. Jinnah's two-nation theory knocked on the head. Some critics saw the germs of Pakistan in grouping but the speaker saw the germs of a very strong Central Government in the proposal. If they had to wait for a Constituent Assembly elected on an adult franchise basis, they would have to wait for years. Meanwhile, the country would continue to suffer.

Mr. *Purshotamdas Tandon*, United Provinces, supporting the resolution, said that in spite of the defects pointed out by various speakers in the Constituent Assembly scheme, the Congress had to go into the Constituent Assembly and from within make it a sovereign body. There was no need for the Congress to be afraid. The Congress had its inherent strength and no one could prevent it from achieving its object. Some people had objected to the Congress entering into negotiations with the British Government. In his opinion, there was room for both negotiations and revolution—they could go together. The two had to be blended together harmoniously.

The closure was applied at this stage, although the President said he had the names of 16 more speakers on the list. The closure was carried by an overwhelming majority and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the mover of the resolution, replied to the debate.

MAULANA AZAD REPLIES

Maulana Azad dealt with the various criticisms made against the resolution by those who opposed it. He said many of the Opposition speakers had stated that the British Government were responsible for sponsoring the Constituent Assembly. That was utterly wrong.

"No one can say," declared the Maulana, "that the British Government sent the Cabinet Mission to India to offer us the Constituent Assembly as a free gift. We have secured the Constituent Assembly as a result of our struggle and sacrifices during the past past 50 years. The final struggle that was launched by Mr. Gandhi in 1942 did, of course, hasten the pace of our freedom movement.

"The British people and their Labour Government have realised that we, the people of India, are determined to have our freedom, and nothing on earth can prevent us from achieving our goal. The British Government had, therefore, to make up their mind whether they should transfer power peacefully and quit, or allow us to take it forcefully. They have chosen the wiser course.

"I am unable to agree with those who say that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall be weakening the Congress organization. Why should anyone think that by going into the Constituent Assembly we shall weaken ourselves? Whatever difficulties may stand in our way, we will overcome them as we are determined to reach our final goal. We will not in any event sacrifice any of our fundamental principles. If unfortunately any insuperable difficulties crop up in direct conflict with our fundamental principles, we shall not hesitate to kill the Constituent Assembly.

"Opposition speakers have exhibited a fear complex—a vague fear of the unknown. I ask if there is any problem which has no difficulties inherent in it. It is no use approaching any problem with fear complex. If we do this, we shall not be able to achieve anything at all.

"In the proposed Constituent Assembly, the Congress will have a definite majority and in spite of this, we have fears as to how we are going to settle the fate of the country. We have won our struggle for freedom through sheer sacrifices and suffering, and I will ask you now not to falter and fritter away the fruits of victory by adopting a gloomy outlook and fear complex.

"Statesmanship demands that we should be practical in our approach to problems. We must utilise opportunities, as they present themselves, to further our own ends. Sometimes the circumstances may be such that we may have to decide on a struggle. At other times it may be that the door to our goal can be opened through negotiations, and in such a situation it is our duty to enter into negotiations and enter through the doorway that is open.

"The Congress has never departed from its fundamental principle of direct action. We have always sworn by it. We made it clear to the British Government even before the Cabinet Mission was sent to India that they should either give us our freedom or face a struggle. We were then told that we were indulging in threats. We made it clear that it was wrong of the British Government to regard it as a mere threat. Against this background we started the Delhi negotiations.

"It has been argued that the Central Government will not be a strong one unless it has within its fold economic relations and finance. These questions will be settled by the Constituent Assembly. I do agree that the Central Government can never be effective unless it has the means to support itself. The Congress will never tolerate a weak Centre.

"I want to make it clear that those who say that the Constituent Assembly is a trap are making a great mistake. There is no question of the Constituent Assembly being a trap. We asked for a Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution for a free and independent India, and the Cabinet Mission agreed to our demand. How then can anyone call it a trap?

"I want to emphasize that by accepting the Constituent Assembly proposal, we shall lay at rest one of the longest standing communal problems. The Muslim League has been demanding all these years the division of India into Hindustan and Pakistan and two separate constitutions. Both these things have been abandoned by the Muslim League by its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals of May 16. The result of these proposals is that there shall be one United India and one Constituent Assembly with one Central Government. I ask it this is not a great achievement. If you reject the Constituent Assembly as the Opposition want you to do, I ask if we shall not be adding to our problems and quarrels. Victory has come into our hands and please, do not turn it into a defeat (Cheers). The door to the Constituent Assembly is open to enable us to draw up our own constitution. Please enter it and complete our task of framing our constitution.

The resolution was then put to the vote. Two hundred and four members voted in favour of it, while 51 members voted against it and it was declared carried amidst applause.

RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA

Mrs. *Sarojini Naidu* then moved the resolution on South Africa. She said that she had just received a telegram stating that Mr. Sorabjee Rustomjee had been sentenced to three months' hard labour (Cries of shame). The seed of satyagraha Mahatma Gandhi had sown many years ago on a much smaller issue had grown into a full-fledged tree. Indian nationals in South Africa, men, women and children who had marched with him many years ago, are once again offering satyagraha to uphold their citizenship rights and to fight gross racial discrimination.

The Satyagraha movement had been started by South Africa Indians to fight racial arrogance and animosity. It was a question which affected all the coloured peoples of the world. Had it not been for the recent constitutional negotiations in India which took away the time of the All-India Congress Committee for two days, the South African issue would have assumed paramount importance and would have taken all the time of the Committee.

The people of India who had no Government of their own yet were unable to help their own kith and kin in South Africa except by giving them moral support. Indians in South Africa knew their limitations and were anxiously looking forward to the day when India would be free.

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, seconding the resolution on South Africa, declared that the question of Indians in South Africa was not a local question, but had in it the germs of a global conflict. If this question was not settled honourably for India and Indians, there were bound to be widespread trouble.

At the time of the Boer War, Pandit Pant added, the British settlers said the Boers were anti-Indian and were illtreating them. But now, the British settlers themselves were a menace to Indians and to the honour and dignity of India.

The history of Indian settlers who went there mostly as labourers had been one of steady deterioration and degradation. First, there was economic discrimination, next came land restrictions, and now their very lives had been segregated.

A large part of the prosperity of Africa was due to the pioneering work done by Indian settlers under the most trying and adverse conditions, and it was sheer, blind ingratitude on the part of the ruling party in South Africa now to pass anti-Indian laws which deprived Indians of living as human beings.

The question of Indians in South Africa was not just a parochial matter. It involved the very right of coloured people to live side by side with white men, with equal rights, privileges and opportunities. It was to gain and establish this right that the Indians had now launched a satyagraha movement.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

After the two main resolutions were passed *Pandit Nehru*, the Congress President, took up the non-official resolutions. Pandit Nehru said that a number of non-official resolutions had been given notice of, but as this session of the Committee was a special emergency meeting there was no time to consider them.

Dealing with one non-official resolution relating to Indian States, Pandit Nehru said that the resolution passed at the Haripura Congress with regard to Indian States would have to be changed as that resolution hindered the work of the Congress in Indian States. There had been a great awakening in Indian States and there were different political organizations in the States such as the National Conference, the State Congress Pratinidhi Sabha and the Praja Mandal. The All-India States' People's Conference had representatives from all States. Sooner or later, he said, the constitution of the Congress would have to be amended or some other step taken to associate the States' peoples with the Indian National Congress.

Referring to the non-official resolution asking the Congress Governments not to resort to the use of the Defence of India Rules, Pandit Nehru said he was not aware whether the Congress Ministries were using the Defence of India Rules or not. But, he said, he was aware that if those Rules were not made use of procurement of foodstuffs in the various provinces might suffer.

Winding up the proceedings of the Committee, Pandit Nehru answered some of the criticisms of the Opposition speaker.

He said: "We have been talking of independence for a long time. Different interpretations are given of what that independence means. The Viceroy and the Muslim League also speak of the independence of India. But the Congress idea of independence is certainly different from that of the Muslim League and the Viceroy. Our idea of independence is that there must be absolutely no foreign domination in India and India may even break her connexions with the British. We want to establish a Republic of India.

"Mr. Achut Patwardhan expressed surprise that foreign affairs could be carried on without foreign trade. The surprise was perfectly legitimate. Why should foreign affairs be carried on without foreign trade? It is astonishing, as Maulana Azad stated, how inferences are drawn and conclusions are built upon them.

"There is no doubt," continued Pandit Nehru, "that in so far as the resolution which we have discussed yesterday and today is concerned, a great deal can be said in favour of it or against it. A great deal can be said about the difficulties and complications in which we may get caught. The whole question is ultimately one of balancing and coming to a conclusion without loss.

"It is obvious, so far as I am concerned, that foreign affairs includes foreign trade. It is quite absurd to talk of foreign affairs without foreign trade, foreign economic policy, exchange, etc."

"As regards defence and communications, obviously they include all manner of things connected with defence. Defence must include a large number of industries. Apart from foreign affairs, defence and communications, the Union Centre will have power to raise finance. This means the Union Centre will control certain revenue-producing subjects. I cannot say offhand what these revenue-producing subjects will be. It is inevitable that a decision will have to be made as to what revenue-producing subjects go to the Centre. Presumably, the obvious subjects are Customs, including tariffs, and may be income-tax also.

"Arguments have been advanced on the one side that this is a very satisfactory Constituent Assembly, something that we have been asking for and have got. On the other hand, it has been stated that this Constituent Assembly is a future thing imposed upon us to which we should not attach much importance. If I am asked to give my own point of view, I would say it is not obviously something which we have desired and worked for. There are many difficulties and snags and the scales are weighted against us.

"On the other hand. it is obvious also that it is not so bad. What will be the outcome of this Assembly? It may be that it does not function for long: it breaks up. It may be that we may get something out of it, and we go ahead and it solves some of our problems, and we produce some kind of constitution which is desirable and workable. All these thing are possible. But it seems to me rather fantastic for the Cabinet Mission to tell us that after ten years we are going to do this or that. It is fantastic and I cannot imagine anybody laying down any rule for India ten years hence."

Pandit Nehru continued: "When India is free, India will do just what she likes. It is quite absurd and foolish to lay down now what she is going to do a few years hence.

"I do think that some time or other in the future we may have to summon our own proper revolutionary Constituent Assembly. That does not mean that we should not take advantage of this and work it out for our own advantage. If we do not succeed in the Constituent Assembly, we change our tactics to suit whatever we want to do.

"There is a good deal of talk of the Cabinet Mission's long-term plan and short-term plan. So far as I can see, it is not a question of our accepting any plan, long or short. It is only a question of our agreeing to go into the Constituent Assembly. That is all—and nothing more than that. We will remain in that Assembly so long as we think it is good for India, and we will come out when we think it is injuring our cause and then offer battle. We are not bound by a single thing, except that we have decided for the moment to go to the Constituent Assembly, not certainly to deliver fine speeches but to build something to overcome some of our problems."

As the discussion in the House was about the proposed Constituent Assembly, Pandit Nehru went on to say that he was reminded of other Constituent Assemblies. Perhaps the comparison was not justified. One hundred-and-fifty-seven years ago, a Constituent Assembly called the "States General" was called in France. It was convened by the King of France himself. He was an autocratic and foolish King and he soon got into trouble with that Assembly and ultimately within a few years, the head of that King was cut off. India, of course, would not cut off people's heads. Again there was the case of the American colonies.

"Do you remember," Pandit Nehru asked, "that even after the declaration of war against England, there were colonies which continued to send humble petitions of loyalty to the English King? It was only after a hard war that things changed. Now, in regard to criticisms against the resolution, it is strange that one should be afraid of a thing because at the beginning it is not exactly to one's liking. It seems to me that we have begun to attach far too much importance to gestures, words and slogans and generally to a certain heroic attitude. It is a dangerous thing. Remember we are a great nation. We are no longer a tiny people begging for freedom at the hands of the British. We are on the verge of freedom."

Pandit Nehru proceeded: "Of course, we have to fight those who come in our way. But we have to be revolutionary, we also have to think in terms of statesmanship—not in terms of careerists. merely shouting slogans and escaping responsibility, but in terms of facing big problems. I beg of you to look upon all these problems in a spirit of revolutionary statesmanship and not in a spirit of submission to opportunism which is so rampant all over India today. There is always a tendency if we enter these Legislatures for us to get entangled in minor problems and forget big things. Although there is that danger, yet it is quite impossible, after we have arrived at a certain stage, to say that you cannot accept responsibility for solving your own problem. The world looks to you and to the Congress for great decisions and it is no use cursing, fuming and freeting."

Pandit Nehru expressed his pleasure at the two women members, who, he said, made fiery speeches. He thought that was indicative of the tempo of Indian womanhood. He urged that more and more opprotunities should be given to Indian women to participate in public life.

League decision on India Plan

Council to meet in Bombay

The grave possibility of the All-India Muslim League not participating in the Constituent Assembly for lack of assurances that the fundamental principle of the Cabinet Mission's scheme will be adhered to, is envisaged by political circles in New Delhi following the announcement on the 9th July that the Council of the Muslim League has been convened at Bombay on July 28 and 29.

The announcement, which was made by *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*, Secretary of the Muslim League, referred to serious developments, particularly to the breaking of solemn pledges by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy over the interim Government plan and to the action of the Congress in accepting the long-term plan only conditionally and with reservation—an interpretation totally opposed to the statement by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on May 25.

The Council is, therefore, to decide what course the Muslim League should adopt in the changed circumstances. It is no secret that the League has viewed with disgust the outcome of the negotiations for an Interim Government as outlined in the Cabinet Mission's statement of June 16. It considers that the Mission and the Viceroy ignored the plain meaning of Para 8 of the statement.

The immediate occasion, however, for summoning the League Council is the nature of references to the Constituent Assembly plan made by prominent members of the Congress Working Committee at the recent AICC meeting.

It will be recalled that on May 25 the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy issued a statement consequential on Mr. Jinnah's statement of May 22 and the Congress Working Committee's resolution of May 24. The Ministers and the Viceroy declared that the scheme of May 16 stood as a whole "and can only succeed if it is accepted and worked in a spirit of co-operation." They added that "the interpretation put by the Congress resolution on para 15 of the statement to the effect that the provinces can, in the first instance, make the choice whether or not to belong to the Section in which they are placed, does not accord with the Delegation's intentions." Despite this categorical pronouncement, the Congress has continued to maintain, with the aid of legal opinion that the provinces have the right to opt out of their Section at the very beginning.

The Mulim League, on the other hand, regards the grouping of provinces laid down in the statement of May 16 as "the corner-stone of the long-term scheme" to use Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan's words.

The League saw another substantial modification of the original plan in the Bengal Europeans' decision not to use their votes for the Constituent Assembly—a decision that followed an agitation in the Congress Press and on Congress platforms :

The speeches at the AICC meeting as repoted were not such as to allay the League's misgiving. *Pandit Jaharlal Neharu*, for instance, is quoted as saying : "There is a good deal of talk of the Cabinet Mission's long term and short terms plans. So far as I can see, it is not a question of our accepting any plan, long or short ; it is only a question of our agreeing to go into the Constituent Assembly. That is all and nothing more than that. We will remain in that Assembly so long as we think it is good to India and we will come out when we offer battle. We are not bound by a single thing except that we have decided for the moment to go to the Constituent Assembly."

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is reported to have said : "If unfortunately, any insuperable difficulties crop up in direct conflict with our fundamental principles, we shall not hesitate to kill the Constituent Assembly."

In Muslim Leaguers' eyes Pandit Nehru's reference to powers of the Centre go far beyond what is laid down in the statement of May 16. and even so he adds :

"I do think that some time or other we may have to summon our own proper revolutionary Constituent Assembly."

Muslim Leaguers said that, while they unreservedly accepted the statement of May 16 as clarified by that of May 25, the implication of the speeches at the AICC meeting was that the Congress had merely agreed to enter the Constituent Assembly to work out a constitution according to its own wishes, quite irrespective of what the Cabinet Mission recommended. Can this be called acceptance of the Mission's long-term plan, they ask. They add that unless either the British Government or the Congress makes it plain that the scheme of May 16, as clarified by the statement of May 25, will be strictly adhered to, it would seem useless for the Muslims, who are in a minority in the Constituent Assembly and, therefore, liable to be outvoted on important issues, to participate in the Assembly at all. The League Council may. therefore, take the view that failing an assurance that the scheme of May 16 still stands it can only rescind its decision of June 6 as the whole basis on which that decision was reached has been transformed.

The Nawabzada said : "Pandit Nehru's remarks yesterday at Bombay—ignoring for the moment his pompous claim to be able to create new situations—should remove any doubts that may have lingered in any quarter as to the real intentions with which the Congress propose to enter the Constituent Assembly. I think that in view of the statements made by Pandit Nehru yesterday and by other speakers at the AICC earlier, it is essential for the British Government to re-state and clarify their intentions as to the Constituent Assembly plan."

This, in the Nawabzada's view, was all the more necessary because the Mission had publicly stated that the Congress had accepted the long-term proposals "contained in the statement of May 16," whereas, according to Pandit Nehru the Congress had accepted only the method of election to the Constituent Assembly, and nothing more. Surely. the Nawabzada commented, no one, not even the Congress or the Mission, could argue that the method of election to the Constituent Assembly was by no means the most vital part of the statement of May 16.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan reiterated the Muslim League view that the Cabinet Mission had gone back on their word as regards the formation of an Interim Government. The Mission's interpretation of paragraph 3 of their statement of June 16 had not been considered even by independent British opinion in India to be a straightforward interpretation. But even that interpretation and the decision based on it were given on the assumption that the Congress accepted the statement of May 16.

"Now, can anyone, after reading the speeches at the AICC and the declarations made by the Congress President, say that the Congress has accepted the statement of May 16" asked the Nawabzada.

All this, he added, pointed to the need for a fresh statement of the British Government's intentions. Without that, it would be worse than useless for the Muslim League to go into the Constituent Assembly or enter into any fresh negotiations which the Viceroy might start for the formation of an Interim Government after the elections to the Constituent Assembly were over. But a decision on these matters, of course, rested with the Council of the Muslim League, which would meet in Bombay on July 28 and 29.

Congress and the Cabinet Plan

Pt. Nehru Explains Issues

The Congress President, *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*, in a 75-minutes Press Conference at Congress House, Bombay, on the **10th. July** discussed a number of important questions such as the position of Indians in Ceylon, the Constituent Assembly, the grouping of provinces as contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, the subjects that will come within the purview of the Union Centre, what the Congress proposes to do in the Constituent Assembly, how the Kashmir Government's ban against his entry into that State has become an all-India issue between the Indian National Congress and the States' People's Conference on the one side and the Political Department of the Government of India and the Kashmir State on the other. This last subject, he said, was likely to affect other matters including the whole question of the States in the Constituent Assembly.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Asked to amplify his statement in the AICC that the Congress had made no commitment in regard to either the long-term or the short-term plan of the Cabinet Mission except to go into the Constituent Assembly, Pandit Nehru said : "As a matter of fact if you read the correspondence that has passed between the Congress President and the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy you will see in what conditions and circumstances we agreed to go into this Constituent Assembly. The first thing is we have agreed to go into the Constituent Assembly and we have agreed to nothing else. It is true that in going to the Constituent Assembly, inevitably, we have agreed to a certain process of going into it, that is, election of the candidates to the Constituent Assembly. What we do there, we are entirely and absolutely free to determine. We have committed ourselves to no single matter to anybody. Naturally even though one might not agree to commit oneself, there is a certain compulsion of facts which makes one accept this thing or that thing. I do not know what that might be in a particular context. But the nature of compulsion of facts would be not of the British Government's desires or intents but how to make the Assembly a success and how to avoid its breaking up. That will be certainly a very important consideration. But the British Government does not appear there at all.

When the Congress had stated that the Constituent Assembly was a sovereign body, Pandit Nehru said: "The Cabinet Mission's reply was it was more or less 'yes', subject to two considerations: Firstly, proper arrangement for minorities and the other, a treaty between India and England. I wish the Cabinet Mission had stated that both these matters are not controversial. It is obvious the minorities question has to be settled statisfactorily. It is also obvious that if there is any kind of peaceful change over in India, it is bound to result in some kind of treaty with Britain.

"What exactly that treaty will be I can not say. But if the British Government presumes to tell us that they are going to hold anything in India (and not build up) because they do not agree either in regard to the minorities or in regard to the treaty, we shall not accept that position. It will become a casus belli. We shall have no treaty if they seek to impose anything upon us and we shall tear up any treaty they try to impose. If they treat us as equals and come to terms there will be a treaty. But if there is the slightest attempt at imposition, we shall have no treaty.

"In regard to the minorities, it is our problem and we shall, no doubt, succeed in solving it. We accept no outside interference in it—certainly, not the British Government's interference in it—and therefore, these two limiting factors to the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly are not accepted by us.

"How to make the job in the Constituent Assembly a success or not is the only limiting factor. It does not make the slightest difference what the Cabinet Mission thinks or does in the matter."

GROUPING PLAN

Referring to grouping, Pandit Nehru said: "The big probability is from any approach to the question, there will be no grouping. Obviously, Section A will decide against grouping. Speaking in betting language, there was four to one chance of the North-West Frontier Province deciding against grouping. Then Group B collapses. It is highly likely that Assam will decide against grouping with Bengal although I would not like to say what the initial decision may be, since it is evenly balanced. But I can say with every assurance and conviction that there is going to be finally no grouping there, because Assam will not tolerate it under any circumstances whatever. Thus you see this grouping business approached from any point of view, does not get on at all."

Pandit Nehru also explained how provincial jealousies would work against grouping. Firstly, he pointed out everybody outside the Muslim League was entirely opposed to grouping. In regard to this matter, the Muslim League stands by itself isolated. Applying that principle you will find in the north-west zone there is a kind of balance of more or less even of pro-grouping and anti-grouping.

Secondly, entirely for other reasons non-political, non-Congress, non-League, there is a good deal of feeling against grouping with the Punjab both in the North West Frontier Province and Sind for economic and other reasons. That is to say, even a Muslim Leaguer in Sind dislikes the idea of grouping with the Punjab, beacause he fears that the Punjab will dominate Sind, Punjab being a dominant party in that group and more aggressive and advanced in some ways. Apart from the imposed discipline from the Muslim League, both in the Frontier and in Sind, the people were unanimously against grouping, because both these Provinces are afraid of being swamped by the Punjab.

PROVISIONAL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Asked when the Provisional National Government would be formed at the Centre, Pandit Nehru said: "I cannot just peep into the future and tell what is going to happen. For the moment we are somewhat engaged in the Constituent Assembly elections. But remember this that the Constituent Assembly is not going to put up easily for long with the kind of Care-taker Government that exists to-day. There is bound to be conflict between them. In fact, the Care-taker Government has no stability; nor is there any possibility of its long continuance, how and when and what shape the new Government will take I cannot say, it will be just entering into phantasy."

When his attention was drawn to the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Muslim League Council at Bombay, Pandit Nehru said: "Whatever the Congress does is always intended to create new situations. We do not follow other people's situations. I am glad that the Muslim League has realised that we have created a new situation. We propose to create many further new situations. What we shall do if the League decides to do this or that we will see what the conditions then are and decide accordingly."

UNION CENTRE'S POWERS

Dealing with the powers of the proposed Union Centre, Pandit Nehru said: "According to the Cabinet Mission's proposals there were three or four basic subjects in it, i. e., Defence, Foreign Affairs, Communications and the power to raise finances for these. Obviously, Defence and Communications have a large number of industries behind them. So these industries inevitably come under the Union Government and they are likely to grow. Defence is such a wide subject that it tends to expand its scope and activities more and more. All that comes under the Union Government.

"Similarly, External Affairs inevitably include foreign trade policy. You cannot have foreign policy if you divorce foreign trade from it. They include all manner of things which are not put down there, but which can be brought in."

Referring to the question of raising finances for the Union, Pandit Nehru said it had to be done by taxation. "If anyone suggests that some kind of contribution or doles are going to be given by the Provinces or States, it is bunkum. No Central Government carries on on doles." He recalled how an attempt to carry on with contributions had ended in a failure in the United States in the early days of the American Confederation. "Inevitably therefore," he added, "any Central Government must raise its finances by taxation. I cannot make a list now, but obviously Customs, including tariffs, is bound to be one. In fact, tariff is connected with foreign trade policy. It may be income-tax will be another. I do not know what else."

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the Central Government must be responsible for foreign markets, loans and such other subjects. It must also obviously control currency and credit. Who is going to do it if not the Centre? You cannot allow each unit or Province to carry on a separate type of credit and foreign policy.

"Suppose there is trouble between the Provinces or States or an economic break-down due to famine conditions the Centre comes in again, inevitably. However limited the Centre might be you cannot help the Centre having wide powers because the past few years have shown that if there were no central authority, the conditions would have been far worse in India. However the fact that there has been a central authority has not done much good to the country because it has been incompetent. It is obvious, that without the central authority you cannot deal with the problems mentioned above. There must be some over-all power to intervene in grave crisis breakdown of the administration or economic breakdown or famine. The scope of the Centre, even though limited, inevitably grows, because it cannot exist otherwise.

Cabinet Mission's Work Reviewed

House of Lords—London—18th. July 1946

Lord Pethick-Lawrence's Statement

An appeal on behalf of the British Cabinet Mission to the two major parties in India to put aside their keen communal and party feelings and work together for the good of India was made by the Secretary of State for India, *Lord Pethick-Lawrence*, in concluding his review of the Mission's work in India in the House of Lords to-day.

"As there is so much to tell, I will only say one thing by way of introduction regarding the problems with which we have to deal. If you take all the population both in Europe and Asia, of the Soviet Union, and all the people of the British Isles and all the White people throughout the British Empire and add them all together, even then, you do not reach a total as great as that of the Indians in India. Not only that, but that vast sub-continent has great diversities of race, religion, language and culture. No wonder then that Indian statemen are deeply conscious of their responsibilities and take divergent views as to the precise constitutional future of that country.

"The two great parties in British India, Congress and the Muslim League, who between them nearly swept the polls in the recent provincial elections are acutely divided on this matter. While the Congress has always stood for one United India, the claim of the Muslim League has been for the division of India into Hindusthan and Pakistan.

"Therefore, while the first task of the Mission was to convince Indians of the sincerity of the British people in offering them Independence within or without the British Commonwealth according to their choice, their second task was to bridge the apparently unbridgeable gap separating the rival views of the two great Indian parties. I think I can claim without fear of disagreement that as for the first, we were entirely successful (Cheers). All leaders of Indian opinion now realise that the British people mean what they say and will do their part, to carry it into effect. As to the second, I believe the facts as disclosed in the voluminous Command papers [White Papers], which I hope to make more clear, speak for themselves.

TALKS AT SIMLA

"We began by getting into direct personal contact, orally and by correspondence, with the most representative men and women in India, not only of the great Indian parties and from the States, but also of other sections and minorities in British India. Their views profoundly influenced us in forming our opinion as to the best way to approach the problem.

"The main difficulty lay in the fact that not only were the major parties differing in their views of the future constitutional structure of India, but this divergence prevented them from agreeing on a constitution-making machinery. The Congress wanted a single constitution-making body, while the Muslim League wanted two separate constitution-making bodies—one for Hindusthan and one for Pakistan.

"After considerable discussion with them separately, we decided to invite them both to send four representatives each to meet us together at Simla and consider a proposal for forming a constitution on a three-tier basis. This, they agreed to do while reserving complete freedom of comment and action. The Simla talks were marked by a very welcome spirit of accommodation shown by both parties and, although a final agreement was not reached the talks ended amicably and sufficient progress had been made to justify us in putting out a statement on May 16 which we believed, was sufficiently near to the views of both parties to be likely of acceptance.

"That statement did not purport to lay down a constitution for India. This was a matter only for Indians. What we did was to put forward the three-tier suggestion and offer it as a basis for the constitution-making machinery. The tier basis is nothing more than our recommendation to the Indian peoples, but on the basis of these proposals we were asking the parties to join in the formation of a Constituent Assembly. But it was necessary to stipulate that the provisions should not be altered without a majority of the two major communities. In paragraph 18, we gave our reasons for taking a population-basis for the allocation of seats on the Constituent Assembly and this method has met with general approval.

"In paragraph 14, we dealt with the question of the Indian States. We had discussions with the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, the Nawab of Bhopal and were very impressed with the helpful and co-operative attitude they adopted throughout and to that attitude can be attributed much of the success of the solution of the problem of the Indian States.

"Our attitude to the States is expressed in paragraph 14 of the statement where we record their willingness to co-operate and also their helpful attitude as to the winding up of Paramountcy relationship. This matter was further elaborated in the memorandum handed by us to the Chancellor. The views of the

States for whom the Chancellor is responsible are given in Command 6862, Document Four. It will be seen that a Negotiating Committee has been set up to arrange for the participation of the States in the constitution-making body.

"The May 16 statement as a whole had an excellent reception, though there were points in it that were criticised on many sides. Neither of the major parties could achieve their whole objects, though it presented a practicable and flexible compromise and we hoped they might both accept it.

"After issuing that statement there followed another period when all the parties in India were discussing up the pros and cons in minute detail as it affected their own principles and the principles of their particular sections.

ACCEPTANCE OF PLAN BY CONGRESS & LEAGUE

"There were also verbal exchanges between them and ourselves as to the Constituent Assembly, as will be seen in some of the earlier letters published and from the statement issued by the Mission on May 25. On June 6, the All-India Muslim League Council passed a resolution which while critical of the contents of our statement of May 16, particularly on the issue of Pakistan, and while reserving opinion on those points, definitely accepted the scheme put forward by the Mission. This was a great step forward and I pay tribute to courage and statesmenship of Mr. Jinnah that, in advance of the Congress, he should have advocated in his Council and carried through that body acceptance of our proposals, which differed substantially from the views held until then and vigorously expressed by his followers.

"The Congress did not at that time come to any final decision but, if I may anticipate events, they, too, on June 26, in a resolution and in a letter to the Viceroy, while expressing their views on interpretation, announced their acceptance of the proposals set out in our statement of May 16.

"Thus, we have secured in the end the acceptance of both the major parties in India to these proposals. Nominations and elections to the constitution-making body have accordingly been proceeding in the present month and, from the news which reaches me, it would seem that some of the best human material in India is likely to be returned to take part in the deliberations. If my expectations in this respect are fulfilled a most valuable start has been made in the creation of a constitutional structure for the future of India.

"Before leaving this, I would like to say a few words about some recent reports from India as to the intentions of the parties in joining the Constituent Assembly. We saw both parties shortly before we left and they stated to us quite categorically that it was their intention to go into the Assembly with the objective of making it work. They are, of course, at perfect liberty to advance their own views as to what should or should not be the basis of the future constitution. That is the purpose of the Constituent Assembly—to hammer out agreement from diverse opinions and plans. Likewise, they can put forward their views as to how the Assembly should conduct its business but, having regard to the statement of May 16 and the Constituent Assembly elected in accordance with it, they cannot, of course, go outside the terms of what has been agreed to. That would not be fair to the other parties who go in and it is on the basis of that agreed procedure that the British Government have said they will accept the conclusions of the Constituent Assembly.

"STATES FREE TO 'COME IN OR NOT"

"As to the States, they need have no anxiety since it is for them to decide freely to come in or not, as they choose. It is for that purpose that they have set up a Negotiating Committee and I am sure that that Committee will have the wisdom to work out an acceptable basis for their co-operation in the Assembly.

"It is on a free consensus of the many diverse elements of the Indian people that the success of the new constitution will depend. I am confident from all that was said to me in India that all parties appreciate this fundamental fact. Union cannot be by force. It must be by agreement and it will be the task of the Assembly to obtain that agreement. It will be possible for the majority and minorities alike to prepare to co-operate for the good of the future of all India."

FORMATION OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT

Dealing with the negotiations for the creation of Interim Government, Lord Pethick-Lawrence said: "I need hardly point out that, during this interim period, it is most desirable, if possible, to get an Interim Government which is in the nature of a coalition and in which, at any rate, the two major parties are both represented. No agreement was reached at Simla on this point, or after our return to Delhi. A very strong point with the Congress was related to the powers and status of the Interim Government and the treatment of it by the Viceroy. The Congress took exception to parity between the two parties and attempts were made to meet this by forming an Interim Government on the basis of six Congress representatives—five Caste Hindus and one representative of the Scheduled Castes—five Muslims, and two others. Mr. Jinnah might possibly have agreed but the Congress were not satisfied with this.

"We reached a complete deadlock and it seemed that the only possible way to break it was for the Viceroy, in consultation with the Mission, to choose a suitable Interim Government on a basis of six Congress, including one from the Depressed Classes, five Muslims, one Sikh and two others—one a Parsi, another an Indian Christian. The Viceroy had had unofficial and tentative lists of names from both sides and these were largely used in the selection.

"Mr. Jinnah took up the position that he would await the Congress decision before giving that of the Muslim League. The Congress were very much troubled by the type of parity still remaining between the Muslim League and Caste Hindus and on the matter concerning minority representation.

"But the Congress despite all difficulties, might have consented to this arrangement had there not been unfortunately, a widely-published disclosure of certain letters written by Mr. Jinnah at that moment the most important of which contained a sentence that the Muslim League would never accept the appointment of any Muslim by the Viceroy other than a Muslim Leaguer. This became major issue. The Congress had suggested that they should be allowed to substitute a Muslim for one of their number, but this had been opposed by the Viceroy and they might have waived the suggestion had it not been that a public challenge was made at this moment to their right to do so. The Congress had always insisted on the national character of their organisation and this is fully demonstrated by their nomination of personnel in the Provincial Assemblies—I mean national, as opposed to communal, character.

LEAGUE'S MONOPOLY CLAIM NOT ACCEPTED

"It was made clear to Mr. Jinnah that neither the Viceroy nor the Mission could accept his claim to a monopoly of Muslim appointments.

"We felt we could not at this stage accept much alteration of the Viceroy's plan. In the statement of June 16, we had laid down the course we should pursue in the event of both or either of the two major parties not being able to accept a Coalition Government on the basis proposed. If either opposed it the whole basis of the coalition fell to the ground. In this event our statement of June 16 stated that the Viceroy would seek to form an Interim Government which would be as representative as possible of all those willing to accept the statement of May 16.

"When the Congress ultimately came to their final decision to accept the May 16 statement, while unfortunately rejecting the Interim Government they quite clearly became equally eligible with the Muslim League for inclusion in such a representative Government. Immediately we received from the Congress President letter No. 31, we saw Mr. Jinnah and told him the position, giving him a copy of the letter and informing him that the scheme of June 16 had fallen to the ground.

"Up to that moment, the Muslim League had arrived at no decision as to their attitude to the proposals of June 16 and they had adopted the line that they must await the Congress decision before they themselves decided. In view of the Congress decision, it was then too late for any decision of the Muslim League to be effective. Mr. Jinnah went on to the meeting of the League Working Committee which passed the resolution accepting the scheme of June 16. Presumably, Mr. Jinnah told the Committee of his interview with us. Mr. Jinnah seemed to think that acceptance by the Congress of the May 16 proposals had put him into a false position and that we should have proceeded with the formation of an Interim Government with the Muslim League alone.

"It is easy to realise the disappointment of Mr. Jinnah that the Congress had not accepted what apparently seemed to him an acceptable arrangement, while at the same time qualifying themselves for consultation upon the formation of some other Interim Government by agreeing to operate the plan of May 16. The situation now is that the Viceroy will proceed to act on Paragraph 8 of the statement of June 16 after a very short delay.

FRESH NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT

"I must make it clear that during this short delay, purely protectively, an official Government had been set up, but this is purely a temporary expedient to tide over the time until a representative Government has been formed. No one desired an official Government, and any other solution was impossible."

"Only those who carried out the intensive negotiations can realise how exhausted all the participants were. It was essential to have a short interval after the three and a half months of intensive work and so that the Indian parties could participate in the elections to the Constituent Assembly.

The next stage will be for the Viceroy to resume negotiations at the earliest practicable moment with the two major parties for the formation of an Interim Government. This will be a difficult task and we hope that the fact that the constitution-making machinery has been launched will make both parties realise the absolute necessity for agreeing on the question of an Interim Government.

"This Government does not purport to be any permanent structure. It is purely a Provisional Government to carry on for the time being. It would, therefore, seem inappropriate for a party to insist on principles which would affect the long point of view, but would not affect the influence of the interim arrangement. Both parties should be ready to sink their communal differences and come together for the good of India in this difficult time and set up an efficient and representative Government which was so vital to her future welfare."

APPEAL TO SIKHS

"So far I have concentrated on the major parties," he continued. There was also the question of the representation of that large proportion of the population other than the major parties and whose position was entitled to very serious consideration. He had, he said, already referred to arrangements in the discussion they had with the Indian States.

There was the question of the Sikhs. The difficulty arose from the inescapable facts of the geographical position of the Sikhs. Whereas the Sikhs numbered five million, the Muslims numbered 90 million and the Sikhs were not a geographical entity. Full consideration, he said, should be given to their claim and full consideration had been given to it as a distinct community. The most the Mission could do was as outlined in the White Paper. On a population basis, they had been given 4 out of 22 seats in the Punjab. The situation could be brought up and considered by the Advisory Committee on Minorities. He appealed to the Sikhs to reconsider their attitude and their decision not to take part in the work that was now being done.

DEPRESSED CLASSES AND OTHER MINORITIES

There were two other claimants for representation with which he wished to deal. Lord Pethick-Lawrence referred to the Depressed Classes led by Dr. Ambedkar and said that they would have very full representation, through the Congress-affiliated organisation. The Mission had interviewed the leaders of the Congress organisation and were convinced of their genuine desire to help the Depressed Classes. It was another matter on which the Advisory Committee on Minorities might reach some solution and he hoped that the Committee would be generous in their allocation of seats to minorities.

There was also the question of other minorities including the Christian and the Anglo-Indian whose representation would, they hoped, be safeguarded by the Advisory Committee.

In the statement of May 25, the Mission had singled out adequate provision of protection for minorities as one of the two matters on which the British Government required assurances before it would recommend Parliament to cede authority. They profoundly hoped that the matter would not be allowed to become controversal.

He went on to pay a tribute to his Cabinet colleagues and the Viceroy whose resource, initiative and wise judgment had been invaluable, and without whose help they might not have got anywhere. He also paid tribute to the Indian statesmen with whom they came into contact. Although they were dealing with matters that were acutely controversial, their personal relationships always remained very friendly. And, though the Mission at times had felt a little impatient at delay, they had to bear in mind the tremendous importance of having to think again and then still think again, when they were considering a frame-work under which they might have to live for centuries to come.

He was quite sure that the Lords would bear in mind the delicate state of the negotiations that were being carried on and that they would refrain from any remark that might cause harm. The work which he and his colleagues had been engaged on for three and a half months had been no light task and it was fraught with consequences of the greatest proportions, not only to India and Britain, but to the world. If they had been able to reach a partial solution of some of the problems and helped their Indian friends in any way, he was very glad to have taken his part in this great work.

House of Commons—London—18th. July 1946

Sir Stafford Cripp's Statement

Sir Stafford Cripps, in his statement in the House of Commons, said:

"The House must, I am sure, be fully conscious of the fact that the circumstances in the Spring of 1946 were vastly different from those of 1942 or 1939. India has shared to the full in the political awakening which is evident all over the world after the war and nowhere perhaps more than in the Far East. Pressures which were sufficiently in evidence before the war and during the war have become greatly accentuated and what might have been considered a reasonable speed of progress before the war would now be regarded as dilatory and inadequate.

"I have always personally believed that our best hope of maintaining the valued friendship and co-operation of the Indian people was to offer them their full and untrammelled freedom as to their own future and to help them to the best of our ability to achieve their desires as smoothly and quickly as possible. There is no doubt whatever that since, at any rate, the early months of this year, no other approach than this would have had any chance of success at all.

"When the Mission first arrived in New Delhi the atmosphere for agreement between the parties was not propitious. We found a highly-charged political atmosphere resulting from the elections which were still in progress in some of the provinces and a deep suspicion that somehow or other our object would be to delay and frustrate the hopes of Indian independence.

"The issue of 'one or two Indias' had been bitterly contested at the elections and the two major parties, the Congress and the Muslim League, had each of them almost swept the board in their respective constituencies. To some extent perhaps this outstanding success of the two major parties simplified the matter because the smaller parties had been relegated to the background by the electorate but on the other hand, it had of course, reinforced both the major parties in their directly opposed parties.

"There was another factor which had an influence and that was the weather. Summer in New Delhi is not the best place and time for negotiations; excessive heat and latterly, in June, dampness, make it difficult for all parties to maintain that atmosphere of calm and patient deliberation which is so essential in dealing with such complex negotiations.

PRELIMINARY TALKS

"Perhaps the House will permit me in this association to pay a very real and sincere tribute to the noble Lord who presided over our Mission and whose calm, patient and determined conduct of the negotiations was so largely responsible for the results that we are able to report."

Speaking of the initial month of the negotiations and the formal interviews with all communities, sections and individuals, Sir Stafford said: "There was some criticism of the time we spent upon these interviews, but we were all convinced that they were well worth while and they certainly enabled us to appreciate the feelings and desires—vastly differing desires—of the very diverse population of 400 million people with whose representatives we were dealing."

Sir Stafford said that before leaving New Delhi for a four-day holiday in Kashmir the Mission indicated their hope that the two principal parties might come together for negotiation during their absence. He added: "Immediately upon our return finding that nothing further had transpired, we set ourselves the task of bringing together the Muslim League and the Congress. We were determined not to lose any opportunity of reaching an agreement.

"Apart from the difficulty in arriving at a common view as to the form of the composition of the Interim Government there was in these initial stages a wide difference of approach on the part of the two parties. The Congress held strongly that the question of the Interim Government should first be settled after which a settlement as to the Constituent Assembly should follow. The Muslim League on the other hand, were equally firm that they could not discuss the composition of the Interim Government until the longer-term question associated with the setting up of the constitution-making machinery had been settled.

"It was not practicable to obtain a settlement of both questions simultaneously and we came to the conclusion that the best chance of ultimate agreement upon the whole matter was to deal with the longer-term question first and thereafter immediately to tackle the problem of the Interim Government. It was on that basis that we proceeded. It therefore became necessary to work out with the leaders of all main parties some basis upon which these parties would be prepared to meet for discussion of the long-term problem.

"Our difficulty here was that the Muslim League were committed up to the hilt to an independent fully sovereign Pakistan as a separate entity while the Congress were equally strongly pledged to a Unitary India though they had stated that they could not compel the people of any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared will.

THE SIMLA CONFERENCE

"The second stage of our negotiations was therefore introduced by a very intense period of personal interviews and conversation during which a joint basis was worked out for discussion and ultimately both parties, while making it clear that they were in no way bound expressed their willingness to meet in Simla to discuss the matter."

Sir Stafford then quoted the basis of the future constitutional structure of British India—a Union Government dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications; two groups of provinces, one predominantly Hindu and the other predominantly Muslim, dealing with all other subjects which the provinces in the respective groups desired to be dealt with the common; Provincial Government to deal with all other subjects and have all residuary sovereign rights—and commented: "It was upon this purposely vague formula worked out in conjunction with the leaders of the two parties that we were able to bring together to confer with us in Simla four representatives each from the Congress and the Muslim League. We were not over-optimistic regarding the final agreement at the stage but what we hoped for and in fact, realised was a much closer approach to a solution which would narrow the gap between the two parties and so enable us subsequently to put forward to them suggestions for bridging that gap."

Sir Stafford said that towards the end of the Simla Talks the two sides produced written statements of their rival demands which, he said, showed that both had moved very considerably from their initial standpoints. Sir Stafford continued: "It was not possible to get the parties any closer to one another at Simla and so with their consent the meetings were terminated after lasting a fortnight and the Mission announced that it would return to New Delhi and put out a statement of its own views. We had, in fact, worked very hard on the production of a plan while at Simla adapting it in the light of the negotiations and on our return to New Delhi we were able to finalise it quickly so that it was issued on May 16.

"It is perhaps worth stating that—contrary to the allegations which were made in some quarters in India—we had not gone out to India with any cut-and-dried plan. We went out with open minds since our object was not to impose a plan on India but to help Indians to agree on a plan amongst themselves. We did not desire in any way to interfere with the making of the future constitution of India which was and is a matter entirely for Indians. On the other hand as we were asking the different communities to join in the forming of a constitution-making body on a certain basis which we believe to conform to the greatest possible common measure of agreement between them we had to offer each of them some security that, if they came in on that basis it would not be changed without their consent.

Therefore he said the Cabinet adopted a basic form for the future constitution. A point to note was that "this three-tier system, as it had been christened, is nothing more than our recommendation to the Indian people."

But, as it was on that basis that the Cabinet Mission was asking the parties to join in the formation of the Constituent Assembly it was necessary to stipulate that the provisions should not be varied without a majority of each of the two major communities. "This was designed with, we were sure, the assent of the Congress to give a degree of security to the Muslims if they came in on the basis of our recommendations", Sir Stafford added.

Commenting on the part of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 giving their resons for adopting the population-basis for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. Sir Stafford said that this method had met with very general approval.

PROTECTION FOR SMALLER MINORITIES

Of the special procedure for the extra protection of the minorities, Sir Stafford said: "To this we attach great importance. A straight population-basis for the Constituent Assembly with election by single transferable vote inevitably results in the minorities to some extent, losing their weightage in the provincial legislature. It was wholly impracticable to extend the population-basis to each of the minorities individually, because their numbers are so divided up amongst the different provinces that in practice, would have resulted in some of them not gaining any representation at all. We, therefore, took only three major divisions—Muslims, Sikhs and General. In the category. the Congress are of course, the vast majority and, if—as in fact they are doing—they provide adequate opportunities for minority representatives to get elected, the minorities will gain and not lose by the arrangement.

"Despite this we still felt that the minorities should have some special consideration and we were sure from our negotiations that both the major parties were anxious to give them good and fair treatment. We proposed, therefore, an Advisory Committee. This provides a way of initiating recommendations for minority protection in the constitution in a body which should consist mainly of minority representatives. We believe that this method is more likely to produce sound and just results than an insignificant minority in the Constitution Assembly which is the most that could, by any electoral device, have been obtained for the minorities."

Sir Stafford said that the Cabinet's statement of May 16 gained an excellent reception in India, adding "though of course, there were points in it that were criticised on many sides. Neither of the two parties could achieve the whole of their objective through it, but it presented a practicable and flexible compromise which we hoped that they both might accept."

EFFORT FOR INTERIM GOVT. FORMATION

Regarding the formation of an Interim Government which the Mission regarded as matter of great importance Sir Stafford said: "We stated then (May 16) and we still take the view that a Coalition Government having full popular support, was necessary, and that we were anxious to settle its composition as soon as possible so that the two things—the constitution-making machinery and the Interim Government—could go forward together. Moreover it appeared clear at that time, as I have pointed out that the Congress was unlikely to accept the long-term plan until a solution had also been found for the long-term question of an Interim Government."

Sir Stafford said that the letters exchanged during the period of waiting, which was essential to give the party leaders time to consult, showed a gradual elimination of some of the difficulties which seemed almost insuperable to the parties in the first instance. He emphasised that the points of disagreement were few and the general degree of acceptance was very great.

Of the All-India Muslim League's resolution of June 6, accepting the scheme put forward by the Mission, Sir Stafford said: That was a great step forward and it must have required no little courage and determination on Mr. Jinnah's part in the light of the strong views held and very forcibly expressed by his followers to support and carry this resolution through the Muslim League."

PROVINCES' RIGHT TO OPT OUT

Sir Stafford said that there were two main points which the Congress was stressing as to the statement of May 16. "The first two as to whether provinces were compelled to come into sections of the Constituent Assembly in the first instance or whether they could stay out if they wished. We made it quite clear that it was an essential feature of the scheme that the provinces should go into the sections, though if Groups were subsequently formed they could afterwards opt out of those groups. Fear was expressed that somehow or other the new provincial constitutions might be so manoeuvred as to make it impossible for a province afterwards to opt out. I do not myself see how such a thing would be possible but if anything of that kind were to be attempted, it would be a clear breach of the basic understanding of the scheme."

Sir Stafford said that the essence of the constitution-making scheme was that the provincial representatives should have the opportunity of meeting together and deliberating upon the desirability of forming a "Group" and upon the nature and extent of the subjects to be dealt with by the Group. "If when the pattern of a group ultimately emerges, any province wishes to withdraw from the group because it is not satisfied then it is at liberty to do so after the first election under the new constitution when with, no doubt a wider electorate than at present, that matter can be made a straight election issue.

THE EUROPEAN VOTE

"The second point which disturbed the Congress was as to the European vote. The Congress took the view that as we had laid down that the constitution was to be made by Indians for Indians, Europeans had no *locus* at all in the matter. So far as sitting in the Constituent Assembly was concerned this seemed pretty clear and, while we were in India, the European Party in the Bengal Legislature—which is an important case in point—expressed their clear intention neither to nominate nor to vote for any European. Since our departure they have gone further and have decided to take no part in the elections at all and the same has been done, I understand, by the Europeans in Assam.

"That matter has, therefore, been got out of the way, not by our decision but by the sensible and co-operative attitude of the Europeans themselves, who have throughout done their best to assist towards the working out of the new regime in India.

Sir Stafford Cripps continued: "Before I lead this matter of the Constituent Assembly, I must mention some of the recent reports as to the alleged intentions of the parties in joining the Constituent Assembly. We saw representatives of both the parties shortly before we left India and they stated to us quite categorically that it was their intention to go into the Assembly with the object of making it work.

"They are, of course, at liberty to advance their views as to what should or should not be the basis of the future constitution— that is, the purpose of the Constituent Assembly, to hammer out an agreement from diverse opinions and plans. Likewise they can put forward their views as to how the Constituent Assembly should conduct their business. But having agreed to the statement of May 16 and the Constituent Assembly being elected in accordance with that statement, they cannot, of course, go outside the terms of what has been agreed to as that would not be fair to the other parties who have come in.

"It is on the basis of that agreed procedure that the British Government have said they will accept the decision of the Constituent Assembly. As for the States, they need have no anxiety. It is for them to agree to come in or not as they choose. It is for that purpose they have set up a negotiating committee and I am sure the Committee will have the wisdom to work out an acceptable basis of co-operation in the Constituent Assembly. It is upon the free consent of many diverse elements of Indian people that the success of the new constitution will depend, and I am confident from all that was said in India that all parties appreciate that fundamental fact. A union cannot be forced. It must be by agreement, and it will be the task of the Constituent Assembly to attain that agreement which will be possible if majorities and minorities are tolerant and prepared to co-operate for the future of all India."

INTERIM GOVERNMENT

Regarding the Interim Government, Sir Stafford Cripps said that the Viceroy had started his discussions in Simla on the basis of five representatives of the Congress, five from the Muslim League and two representatives of the minorities. That basis was to some extent, he said, influenced by the discussions which the Viceroy had conducted in Simla in 1945.

Sir Stafford added: "The Congress took strong exception to parity between the two parties, and parity at this stage became the foremost obstruction to progress. There are three possible forms of parity. First, between the Muslim League and the Congress on a parity basis. Second, between Hindus and Muslims on a communal basis, and third, between Muslims and Hindus other than Scheduled Castes. We are aiming at a coalition of political parties, and so were concerned with the first form of parity between the Muslim League and Congress."

"We sought to overcome the difficulty about this by adding a Congress representative of the Depressed Classes to their five representatives, thus making six Congress to five Muslim League still retaining two other minority representatives one of whom would be a Sikh. This would have given an Interim Government of 13 in all and not 12 as originally suggested. This proposal Mr. Jinnah was prepared to put to his Committee and it would, I think, have been accepted by them but the Congress was not statisfied with it. At this stage, we tried to get a meeting between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah in the hope that at such a meeting, a compromise could be achieved, but that attempt proved abortive. There was apparently, some misunderstanding by Mr. Jinnah as to the status of the original five-five-two proposal. This is shown by his letter of June 9, which makes it perfectly clear that no assurance was ever given upon this point. It was the basis of the negotiations upon which it was hoped that an agreement might be reached but nothing more happened.

Proceeding, Sir Stafford said: "We thus reached a complete deadlock and it seemed that the only possible way to break that deadlock was for the Viceroy—in consultation with the Mission—to choose a suitable Interim Government on a basis judged most likely to be acceptable to both parties in view of their expressed opinions and to make a statement publicly that he was going ahead on that basis. He so informed the parties, telling Mr. Jinnah that the Congress had not accepted the six-five-two basis. There resulted the second main statement of June 16, that proposed that a Government be built up on the basis of six Congress (including one from the Depressed Classes) five Muslim League, one Sikh and two others, a Parsi and an Indian Christian thus making 14 in all. The Viceroy had had unofficial and tentative lists of names from both sides and these were largely used as a basis of selection of the 14 names. This ended the third state of the negotiations.

MR. JINNAH'S ATTITUDE

"On this occasion, Mr. Jinnah took up the position verbally that he would await the Congress decision before giving that of the Muslim League. The Congress were very much troubled by the type of parity that still remained between the Muslims and the Hindus other than the Scheduled Castes and also by the inclusion of Sir N. P. Engineer, not because of his personal qualifications which they admitted were of the highest, but because they considered that he was holding an official post which they thought gave him an official rather than a representative character. The major problem, however, was still that of parity. "It might have that, despite all difficulties, the Congress would have consented to this agreement had not there been unfortunate and widely published disclosure of certain letters written by Mr. Jinnah at this precise moment. The most important of these was that which contained the following sentence: "The Muslim League would never accept the nomination of any Muslim by you (that was the Viceroy) other than the Muslim Leaguer."

This at once became a major issue. The Congress were in fact considering the possibility of asking for substitution of one of their Hindus by a Muslim in order to get over the parity difficulty. They might, perhaps, have waived this suggestion of nominating a Muslim had it not been that public challenge was at this moment made to their right to do so.

"The Congress, have, of course, always insisted upon the non-communal nature of their organisation, and they have fully demonstrated this fact by their nomination of personnel to those Provincial Governments in which they have a large majority. It was made perfectly clear to Mr. Jinnah on more than one occasion that neither the Viceroy nor the Mission would accept his claim to a monopoly of the Muslim appointments, though the Muslim League were, certainly, to be regarded as the major representative of the Muslim interests."

Sir Stafford Cripps said that in the statement of June 16, the Cabinet had laid down a course which it should pursue in the event of both or either of the two major parties being unable to accept a Coalition Government on the basis there laid down.

"If either of the parties did not accept the scheme of June 16 the whole basis of the proposed coalition fell to the ground, but we desired to protect any who had agreed to co-operate in the Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of May 16. Up to June 16 this indicated the Muslim League only, as neither the Congress nor the Sikhs had upto that time given any decision. They decided, I am glad to say, to accept the statement of May 16 while unfortunately rejecting the Interim Government proposed for reasons I have already stated. This acceptance of the statement of May 16 was an act of statesmanship on their part as it enabled progress to be made towards working out a new constitution.

"Immediately we received the letter from the Congress, we saw Mr. Jinnah and told him the position, giving him a copy of the letter and informing him that the scheme of June 16 had fallen to the ground since the Congress had turned it down. This was confirmed the same evening. Up to that moment the Muslim League had arrived at no decision as to their attitude to the proposal of June 16. As I have already pointed out they had adopted a line that they must await the Congress decision before themselves deciding. Mr. Jinnah went straight from his meeting with us to his Working Committee who had passed a resolution accepting the scheme of June 16. Presumably, Mr, Jinnah told his Working Committee what had passed at the interview, though he does not make this clear in his letter.

"Mr. Jinnah seemed to think that acceptance by the Congress of the statement of Juna 16 had put him into a false position and that we should have proceeded forth-with to the formation of an Interim Government with the Muslim League alone.

"It is easy to realise the disappointment of Mr. Jinnah that the Congress had not accepted what apparently seemed to him an acceptable arrangement of June 16 for a Coalition Government being set up, while at the same time, qualifying themselves for consultation upon the formation of some other Interim Government by agreeing to operate the plan of May 16. Mr. Jinnah was anxious to enter the Coalition Government as laid down in the statement of June 16, but as paragraph eight of that statement made the setting up of such a Government dependent upon acceptance by both parties, it was impossible to proceed upon that basis when one party—and the major party—had stated its unwillingness to accept."

Replying here to an interjected inquiry by Mr. *Richard Butler* (Conservative) as to the meaning of paragraph 8 in the statement of June 16, Sir Stafford Cripps said : "if either the Congress or the Muslim League would not consent to come into the Coalition Government then the scheme for the Coalition Government went because it would no longer be a Coalition and we should have to find some other Interim Government of those who accepted the scheme of May 16."

Sir Stafford continuing said : "The situation now is that the Viceroy will proceed to act under paragraph 8 of the statement of June 16. There had been quite under-standable criticism of the fact that a purely temporary official Government has been set up in the meantime.

It is admittedly necessary to take some immediate steps as regards the Viceroy's Executive as a number of its members had resigned, some of them having returned to this country.

"There were only two possible alternatives, either to proceed at once with fresh negotiations with the two major parties, or else to appoint a purely transitional government until such time as further negotiations could take place.

CARETAKER GOVERNMENT

"For the purpose of such a transitional government the only practical method was to set up a purely official care-taker government and as the House knows that is what has been done and that Government is now functioning. I must make it clear that this is a purely temporary expedient to tide over time until a representative interim government can be formed.

"The deciding factor in the choice between the two alternatives was purely a practical one. No one desired an official government had any other solution been possible. Only those who have carried through the intensive negotiations during the summer months in New Delhi can realise how exhausted all participants were.

"It was essential that there should be a pause after three and a half months of intense work, and this necessity was further emphasised by the fact that all the members of the Congress Working Committee had to leave for the All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay on July 8 and that all parties wished to participate in the elections to the Constituent Assembly.

"I must here pay a tribute to the amazing way in which the Viceroy carried the the great load of these negotiations throughout all these months (cheers) during which he had the task of carrying on all his many day to day duties in the Government of India as well.

"It is not surprising that he too was feeling tired and needed a period of comparative rest, So it was that this purely temporary expedient was adopted.

The next stage which will come very shortly will be for the Viceroy to resume negotiations at the earliest practical moment with the two major parties for the formation of an Interim Government.

This will admittedly be a difficult task, but we hope that the fact that the constitution-making machinery is being now at last launched, will make both the parties realise the absolute necessity for a compromise on the question of the Interim Government. This Government is no part of any permanent structure in India. It is purely a provisional Government to carry on until such time as the new constitution comes into operation and it would, therefore, seem inappropriate for either party to delay its formation by insisting upon principles which for a purely temporary purpose will have no influence upon their future position.

"Members of the Mission would wish to appeal to all those on both sides in

India with whom they developed such trufy friendly relations during their stay in India, to put aside for this purpose their keen communal and party feeling and to come together for the good of all India in this difficult time when an efficient and representative Government is so vital to her future welfare.

THE INDIAN STATES

"So far, I have, of necessity, concentrated upon the position of the two major parties, but although these represent a large proportion of the total population of British India there are other important elements which are entitled to the fullest consideration.

First, perhaps, I might deal with that large section of Indian territory and population which comes within the Indian States.

"The House will be familiar with our relationship with the Indian States, described by the word, Paramountcy.

We have had a series of very interesting talks with the representatives of the Princes and some of the leading States' Ministers as well as a good deal of correspondence, and we were most impressed by the co-operative attitude which they adopted throughout. The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal, was very helpful and will, I am sure, contribute much to a solution of the problems of the Indian States.

The States are willing and anxious to co-operate and to bring their own constitutions into such conformity with those of British India to make it possible for them to enter the Federal Union.

There will, of course, have to be close negotiations between the Negotiating Committee which the States have set up and the major British Indian parties both as to the representation of the States in the Constituent Assembly and as to their ultimate position in the union.

If the same reasonable temper continues to be shown about these matters as was the case while we were in India, we may well hope that accommodation will be arrived at which will enable all India to come within the Union set up by the constitution-making machinery.

THE SIKHS

"I now pass to the question of the Sikhs. It was a matter of great distress to us that the Sikhs should feel that they had not received the treatment which they deserved as an important section of the Indian people.

"The difficulty arises—not from anyone's under-estimate of the importance of the Sikh community—but from the inescapable geographical facts of the situation.

"What the Sikhs demand is some special treatment analogous to that given to the Muslims. The Sikhs, however, as a much smaller community, five and a half against ninety millions, and are not geographically situated so that any area as yet desired—I do not put it out of possibility that one may be devised—can be carved out in which they would find themselves in a majority.

It is, however, essential that the fullest consideration should be given to their claims for they are a distinct and important community and this we have done. But on the population basis adopted, they would lose their weightage and consequently have only four out of a total of twenty-eight seats in the Punjab, or out of thirty-five in the north-western section.

"This situation will to some extent, we hope, be remedied by their full representation in the advisory committee on minorities set up under paragraph 20 of the statement of May 16.

"Over and above that, we have presented to the two main parties—who were both most receptive—that some special means of giving the Sikhs a strong voice in the affairs of the Punjab for the north-western section should be devised. I feel most hopeful that if only our Sikh friends will maintain a single and undivided view among themselves and are patient that they will find their position is generally recognised and that they will be able with the two main parties to work out some satisfactory arrangement.

DEPRESSED CLASSES

"I now come to the third element outside the two major parties—the Depressed classes.

"The difficulty that arises here is that there are two climates to represent this large body of Indians.

"One is identified with the name of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar who has fought so strenuously for the rights of the Depressed Classes and the other which works in close association with the Congress.

"Dr. Ambedkar's organisation is somewhat more local in its character being mainly centred in Bombay and the Central Provinces; the Congress-affiliated organisation is spread widely over the whole country.

"We naturally considered with great care as to what could be done to obtain representation for both organisations in accordance with their popular support in the country.

"The House will remember that the electoral basis for the Depressed Classes representatives is what is known as the Poona Pact, agreed to under pressure by Dr. Ambedkar, which lays down a most complicated system of election, in which there are primary elections by the Depressed Classes electors alone, in which four candidates are chosen from which subsequently in the second election one is chosen by the general electorate.

"Whether this is a good or bad system it is one to which the parties agreed and which is in operation and as a result of it, at least in the provincial elections the Congress made particularly a clean sweep of the whole Depressed Classes constituencies.

"That is a fact and as it was almost universally agreed that members of the provincial legislative assemblies formed the only possible electorate for the Constituent Assembly, it was not possible, even had we desired to do so, to arrange for Dr. Ambedkar's organisation to have any special right of election to the Constituent Assembly. It had failed in the elections and we could not artificially restore its position. The Depressed Classes will, of course, have their full representation through the Congress-affiliated organisation. We intervied leaders of that organisation and were convinced of their very genuine and strong desire to support the case of the Depressed Classes.

"Here again, however, the Advisory Committee on Minorities can provide an opportunity for representation of both organisations and we hope very much that the majority of the Constituent Assembly in setting up that advisory committee, will be generous in their allocation of seats to all minorities, but particularly to minority organisations which though they have a considerable following in the country, have little or no representation in the Constituent Assembly itself.

"Other minorities, though of course, each important in their own field, do not, I think, raise any major questions with which I need here deal. They will all, we hope, be fully represented on the advisory committee.

TRIBAL AREAS

"I should perhaps draw the attention of the House to one other matter in this respect. Members will observe that in paragraph 20 of the statement May 16, we deal not only with the rights of citizens (fundamental rights) and the minorities but also with Tribal and Excluded Areas. Here again it was impossible to arrange for any worthwhile representation for these particular interests in the Constituent Assembly and in consequence we felt that having regard to the very special nature of the problems raised, it was far better for them to be dealt with by a more specialised body. We hope that the advisory committee will appoint small committees of specialists to deal with these matters in various areas so that the Constituent Assembly may have the best possible advice before it comes to any decisions.

"I have attempted in what, I fear, is rather a long review of our negotiations to cover some of the major points. I hope that members will not think that because I have omitted to mention them, there were not a mass of other matters to which we gave most careful attention. We meet daily, including Sundays, and often two or three times a day so that we might consult fully upon every point that arose and despite the heat and long hours, I can, I am sure, say on behalf of myself and my colleagues that we were most cohesive and good tempered team and we certainly did not shirk any single issue that was brought to our attention.

"Before coming to a short summing up of the situation as I now see it, I want to pay a sincere tribute to all those with whom we negotiated. It would be invidious to mention names but I am convinced that every person with whom we deal was genuinely anxious for solution of these most difficult problems.

"They each rightly pressed and pressed very strongly the particular views of their community or party, but also they, one and all, made very considerable compromise which were especially difficult in view of the very pronounced election propaganda-period which had immediately preceded our visit.

"We are most grateful to them for their contribution as well as for the very friendly and helpful way in which they received and entertained us in their country.

"We were sent to India to try and work out with Indian parties a way of completing the structure of Indian Independence which has long been planned and contemplated. Every step that had been taken before and since the first World War has been in that direction, but so far it has not been possible to bring to full fruition the plans and promises that had been made.

"There is no doubt that at the time of our arrival in India there was a universal and dangerous spirit of frustration and disillusionment. The first great step to clear away this form of doubt and hesitation was taken when the Prime Minister made his speech in this House on March 15 last.

"That speech which was accorded a friendly reception from every quarter of the House and by all the British Press had a profound effect in India. We quoted some of the more important passages from it in the opening paragraph of our statement of May 16 that we tried to build.

"In this statement of Government policy the Prime Minister in one respect and in one respect only went further than any British Government had gone before.

THE OFFER OF 1942

"In the offer of 1942, India was promised the position of a Dominion and it was then expressly stated on instructions from the Coalition Government that should India so desire to do, once she had achieved her independence, she would be free to go out of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

"Since 1942 conditions have changed.

"What was then rejected would have been one hundered times more certain of rejection in 1946. The one hope of a peaceful and friendly change of sovereignty was to offer Indians their complete and unqualifying independence, whether within or without the British Commonwealth. In that way alone was there a hope of retaining their friend-ship and ultimate co-operation.

"It was largely this change in approach, announced by the Prime Minister on March 15, that made it possible for our Mission to make headway towards settlement. Without it our visit to India would have been pointless and fruitless.

"When we left India there had undoubtedly been a change of atmosphere. There was trust in the sincerity of the British Government which had formerly been absent and a desire and willingness for co-operation in the solution of India's problems.

"That is the first positive gain, and is something which, we believe, augurs well for our future relationship with an independent India, whether she chooses to remain within or to go without the British Commonwealth.

"Second, we have negotiated an agreement between the main Indian parties and acceptable to the Indian State, which provides a machinery for working out a new constitution. It is not our task to make that machinery work. We must now stand aside always ready and anxious to help if we are wanted but determined not to interfere.

"No one would be so folish as to imagine that the course of constitution-making will be a smooth one. The principal parties will not give up their deeply-held convictions at the moment. But we have succeeded in doing what, it has often been suggested, was necessary. We have negotiated the means of bringing the representatives of the Indian people together—without our presence—to settle for themselves their own exceedingly difficult problems.

"We believe that given the accommodation which both sides have shown in agreeing to the plan, it will not be impossible to work out a solution of the many problems that confront the Constituent Assembly.

"One factor is certainly encouraging and that is that all parties are trying to get the very best persons elected to the Constituent Assembly including many who are not party men at all.

"There is every hope that that body when elected, will represent the views of nearly every element of Indian life including, of course, the minorities although it it is regrettable that the Sikhs have recently withdrawn their candidates. Unfortunately, we did not succeed in acomplishing the second task which we regard as of great importance—that of the setting up of a representative Interim Government.

"We did not fail because of any difficulty between the Viceroy or the British Government and Indians. We have failed because so far we have not been able to devise the composition of a government acceptable to both parties.

"In the ultimate stages the issue came down to very narrow one upon which neither party was prepared to give way—whether the Congress could nominate a Muslim as one of their representatives to the Interim Government.

"It would obviously be undesirable to comment on that situation which is the one with which the Viceroy will have to deal in the forthcoming negotiations nor as I am sure, the House fully realises would it be helpful if the members were to canvass one or the other of the contentions put forward. On both sides convictions are honestly held and both parties attach great importance to this issue.

"The magnitude of what we are trying to accomplish cannot be overestimated. It is nothing less than the transfer by peaceful means of sovereignty to over four hundred million people situated in many diverse territories of differing religions and different races.

"To achieve such an aim would be to revitalise the faith of the world in peaceful methods and human reasonableness. Success though not yet by any means certain is within the grasp of ourselves and our Indian friends, and we may hope that in this realisation the remaining difficulties may be overcome.

"There is one thing of which I feel certain that every person in this House and this county will desire their most heartfelt wishes for success to be conveyed to those representatives of the Indian people who will shortly be meeting in the Constituent Assembly.

Mr. Churchill's Speech

Mr. *Winston Churchill*, who followed Sir Stafford Cripps, said that everyone was glad to see his health restored. The House had been anxious about him when he was in India, because these "long intense and soul-searing conferences" with Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru, accompanied by the exceptional heat of the Indian summer, might have imposed a very severe strain on him.

Declaring that after the Parliamentary recess, there would be a full debate, Mr. Churchill said that all he wished to do now was to put on record some of the principal divergences which separated them, while recognising the point to which they were all committed. "We are all committed to the offer made at the time of the Cripps Mission in the Spring of 1942."

"That offer was made at a moment when the Japanese held full naval command of the Bay of Bengal and it seemed that India might be invaded and ravaged by a large Japanese army. As Prime Minister, I take my full share of the responsibility for making the offer of 1942. Those days of peril are gone, although we received no assistance from the Congress Party of India. Their attitude throughout the war was one of non-co-operation, in spite of which two million or more Indians volunteered to fight for the cause of freedom. The Congress Party gave us no assistance. On the contrary, they did us the utmost injury in their power".

Mr. *Cove* (Labour): "What did the Muslim League do?

Mr. *Churchill*: "The Muslim League did not give active co-operation as a League but the Punjab States produced upwards of 800,000 volunteers. The remarkable thing is that political parties did not at all sway the action of the Indian millions.

Millions volunteered and millions assisted us, all without the co-operation of the political parties. The people with whom the Government are dealing had no means of controlling the enthusiasm and loyalty of their people.

"Nevertheless, although we got no assistance we declared that the offer which we had made should stand. The present Government had therefore sought our agreement and support in sending out a mission of Cabinet Ministers who have just returned after an arduous experience.

Instructions given to the Mission, however, went needlessly beyond those which governed the war time Cripps Mission of 1942.

"The Coalition Government offer was of Dominion Status. Dominion Status includes, of course, the clause in the Statute of Westminster which confers the right of secession in the last resort from the British Commonwealth of Nations.

OFFER OF INDEPENDENCE OBJECTED TO

"The present Government went beyond the offer of 1942. They instructed their delegates to offer full independence directly instead of Dominion Status which left the final decision to a fully constituted Dominion of India after they could see how they got on and how their general situation lay. The result, so far as I can see it, which is now put before us, is the immediate independence of India and severance of all constitutional ties uniting our former Indian Empire to the British Common-wealth of Nations. I wish to register my dissent from this short-circuiting of the original offer.

I consider this short-circuiting or telescoping of the normal procedure upon which both parties agreed, does not give the best chance to hope for a peaceful solution of the Indian problem. Having regard to the elements in India to which the Home Government mainly addressed themselves, it prejudiced, in an adverse sense, the case of whether the vast sub-continent of India, with its population of 400 million, should remain of its own free will, within the Commonwealth of Nations. The Government had the power to make this change. Theirs is the responsibility for making it. Secondly the offer of 1942 was conditional upon agreement being reached among the principal forces and parties in the life of India.

"This has certainly not been achieved. The Mission proceeded themselves to shape the outlines of a settlement and they endeavoured as far as possible to induce all the elements concerned to agree to it as a working basis. Again, I do not see the right of the Government to take this action. I am only anxious to make it clear in this respect also that as on the question of agreement, the Government have gone beyond any position to which I and my colleagues in the National Coalition Government were committed by the offer of 1942".

CRIPPS CONTRADICTS STATEMENT

Sir Stafford Cripps intervening: "Surely, Mr. Churchill will agree that I had precisely the same job to do in 1942. I took the scheme which the Government agreed to and tried to get the two parties to agree to it."

Mr. *Churchill*: "You took out a different scheme."

Sir Stafford Cripps: "Mr. Churchill is not quite accurate. What he was saying was that we ought not to impose some settlement and that it should have been a condition that both the parties agreed to it; that it was something we imposed upon them. In 1942, under the Churchill Government a scheme was got out by the Cabinet and was sent out and my object then was to try to get both the parties to agree to it".

Mr. Churchill continued: "He has not got both parties to agree; They are in most violent disagreement and their passion is mounting day by day. In the second place, the scheme Sir Stafford Cripps took out was a different one. In the first place, that scheme did not commend itself to those to whom he addressed himself and he took positive action of trying to solve the Indian problem for Indians, instead of leaving it for the Indians to solve or not to solve. I do not say he was wrong. But, in 1942, he had no authorisation to attempt to make a separate declaration, apart from any views built up between the Indians. I am not making a complaint of this against Sir Stafford Cripps. I say it is different from the proposals agreed to.

"OBLIGATIONS TO MINORITIES"

"There is a further point of great importance, namely, the faithful discharge of our obligations contracted over so many years and confirmed by so many British Governments to the various minorities in India. I was sorry that the Prime Minister, in his speech of March 15, should have spoken in a somewhat adverse or uncertain sense about the rights of the minorities because protection of these fundamental rights affects our duty and the discharge of pledges which we have so often given."

Mr. Churchill said that the minorities in India were very considerable. There were 40 to 60 million of Depressed Classes who were concerned by the lack of the representation which they were to receive in the Constituent Assembly. "I have received the most clamant and painful appeals from the leaders of these great communities and I discussed them with my colleagues in opposition. When one speaks of a community as large as sixty millions the words minority loses much of its significance. Such immense masses of human being deserve to be treated with respect and consideration positively and not relatively even if there are other and still larger masses who take a different view. After all, in these islands we have only 45 millions—much smaller than the Depressed Classes of India—but we should be sorry to be just called a minority of Europe and have our way of life ordered for us by the vote of other countries.

When the issue also concerns the fundamental rights of these minorities, all pledges in regard to them require the most scrupulous attention by the ruling authority at the moment when it hands over these masses with their fate and their fortunes to another system of government.

"That is a point which I trust we will not find to be one of the difference in principle though there may be difference in emphasis.

"Then there are the Muslims who number about 90,000,000 and who make up so large a majority of the martial races of India. There is no doubt that there is complete lack of agreement at the present time between the two principal communities.

"The Mission have laboured hard and they have dealt particularly with those two communities allowing many other valuable and gallant forces who have a right to live, also to fall back in the background.

"The gulf between these two communities was never more wide than it is at the present moment. The outlook is very grave. Acceptance by the martial races of the final settlement which we make before we leave India is indispensable to future peace.

Among the elements which go to make up India we have the Indian States which together comprise nearly 95,000,000.

The position of these States has been fixed by solemn treaties made with their Rulers. It is proposed to abrogate the treaties and the principle to paramountcy."

Mr. Churchill added it was proposed to abolish the principle of paramountcy to whatever new central government was set up in India.

"If all the minorities are added together they constitute among them much more than half of the inhabitants of India. I am glad to say that so far as I understand the position, the British Government have not renounced the principle of their discharge of their responsibility towards the minorities in India which aggregate at least 225,000,000 out of 400,000 000."

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The attitude of the Mission and the Government on this point was expressed in a single sentence of the plan they put before the representatives of India with whom they dealt.

"This sentence declared that when the Constituent Assembly was formed the British Government would recommend in Parliament such action as might be necessary for cession of sovereignty of the Indian peoples subject only to two provisos which were believed not to be controversial—namely adequate protection for the minorities and willingness to conclude a treaty on matters arising out of transfer of power.

"This seems to be a somewhat light and almost casual manner of treating this responsibility extending to an appreciable part of the human race and touching those fundamental rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness which we have regarded as the birthright of every human being.

"All arrangements which are being made by the Constituent Assembly and any treaties which may subsequently be brought into existence between the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain and a new sovereign, independent Government of India must be subject to the fulfilment of our honourable discharge of our obligations.

"I hope that we all agree with that. A bill or perhaps several bills will have to be presented to Parliament and they will have to pass through all their stages and that is the time when the final decision will have to be taken. Nothing must be agreed to by us at the moment on the transference of sovereignty which will be any derogation of our solemn undertakings."

FAILURE TO FORM INTERIM GOVERNMENT

A great part of the Mission's work in India was devoted to a vain attempt to form coalition cabinet acceptable alike to Moslems and Caste Hindus. The failure of the Mission in this respect had led to temporary reversion to the government of well tried and experienced officials. For the moment, Indian affairs have turned the full circle and we are back again at the start.

Mr. Churchill quoted the terms of Paragraph 8 and continued: "The Muslim League agreed to enter this coalition government and, when the Hindu Congress members refused and it broke down on a point of procedure, I understand the Muslim League made a violent complaint."

Sir Stafford Cripps interjecting said: "As to the timing Mr. Churchill had said that the Muslim League had accepted and that the Congress had refused. The Congress had refused before the Muslims arrived at any decision and they knew, before they arrived at a decision, that it was useless arriving at a decision, because already the scheme had gone."

Mr. Churchill, continuing, said: "I am not making accusasions against the Government. The General Secretary of the Muslim League has gone so far as to say that, unless the situation is clarified, it would be suicidal for the League to enter the Constitnent Assembly. All this raises a most formidable issue. Those who have been to India know well that agreement or opposition of the Muslims to the new system will affect the whole foundation of the problem. One cannot contemplate British troops being used to crush the Muslims in the interests of the Caste Hindus. Whatever our responsibilities may be and whatever may be the appointed day when we will quit India, we must not make ourselves the agent of a Caste Government or a particular sectional Government in order to crush by armed force and modern weapons another community which, although not so numerous, is numbered at 90 millions.

"Having put these propositions and facts on record and being well aware of all the difficulties and of the momentous character of the steps which the Government propose to make, we. on this side of the House, are content that further discussions should stand over till the Autumn, when full opportunity for entering on the merits of the various aspects of this problem will be given and when we shall possess fuller knowledge of the situation and of the forces at work in India than it is possible to have at the present time."

SIR STANLEY REED DIFFERS FROM MR. CHURCHILL

Sir Stanly Reed (Conservative) said that he presumed that Mr. Churchill had spoken for his colleagues on the front Opposition bench. Sir Stanley added: "I speak only for myself, although I shall have the agreement of a considerable number of the members who sit on this side of the House."

They were faced, Sir Stanley said, with one of the greatest events in the history of the human race—the transfer of power and authority wielded by the British people in India for over a century and a half in a manner which had done immense work for the Indian people themselves. He welcomed "the wise and courageous speech which the Prime Minister had made when the Cabinet Mission was going to India and paid a tribute to the unexampled will, patience and endurance of those three colleagues of ours" who went on the mission.

He said he had looked forward for the last four years to the day when India would enter the British Commonwealth as a free and equal partner. If she preferred independence in a Treaty of Partition with Great Britain, he would never dream of standing in the way of full recognition. Hers was the choice and hers was the freedom. "Let us accept that confidently and whole-heartedly, however much we could welcome her association in the Commonwealth as a free and independent partner."

Sir Stanley Reed said the setting up of a Constituent Assembly was the only way of placing squarely on the shoulders of the Indian people the responsibility of framing their own constitution and giving them a collective means of carrying it out. The attitude of the House of Commons should be one of full and resolute confidence in facing the future and one of goodwill, cheer, co-operation and determination to use every atom of influence and help to carry India forward to her goal of full status among nations.

MR. W. G. COVE'S SUPPORT FOR PLAN

Mr. *W. G. Cove* (Labour) congratulated Sir Stanley Reed on his speech and contrasted it with that of Mr. Churchill who, he said, was living in days that were long past and whom he described as an "adolescent imperialist, bereft of power." He believed from Mr. Churchill's speech that Mr. Churchill did not want a settlement in India, and thought that speech was deliberately chosen to provoke a stirring among the minorities in order that the path to freedom for India might be made more difficult. Mr. Churchill's speech would be regarded in certain quarters as a mischievous speech intended to prevent progress, and he hoped it would have no effect in this country.

"The plan is very resilent which fits in not only with the position in India but more particularly with that of Britain in the realm of world politics," Mr. Cove said Britain could not afford to offend the Muslims. The plan did not recognise their position throughout the Middle and Near East down to the Far East. He hoped the minorities would not be so safeguarded as to prevent the voice of the majority having its rule in India. There was the danger of over-obsession with the rights of minorities which might yet spell disaster to a settlement.

He asked whether entry into the groups would be free or compulsory. Was the Constituent Assembly to be free or not free of the governing party and would it have full rights of democracy ?

"CONGRESS HAS MADE EVERY SACRIFICE"

There has been artificial stimulation with regard to communal difficulties. The Congress has made every sacrifice to meet the present situation and could not give up one certain vital principle, namely, that they would not brook any electoral, register based purely on communal interests or rights.

He hoped, having regard to the fact that the Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah had achieved everything and even more than was their legitimate right, that the League would not be bolstered up by the various interests in this country to destroy any hope of success.

Mr. *Godfrey Nicholson*, Conservative member of the Parliamentary Delegation which recently visited India, said that the Cabinet Mission had made one great achievement in that they had set at rest once and for all the belief that had been prevalent in India that the British were willing to let Indian failure to agree to be an excuse for not making further constitutional progress.

Mr. *Thomas Reid* (Labour) and retired civil servant who had been many years in the East, recalled his connections with India and said that, if the Mission had done nothing else, but allay the tension, it had done remarkably valuable service. The time was long past when Britain could rule India without consent. Speaking as a friend of India, he appealed to Indians to set up an Interim Government and sweep aside little trivialities. It was up to Indians to show that they would not fail and disgrace themselves in the eyes of the world.

Mr. *Hugh Molson* (Conservative) said that the task of dealing with the Indian problem should be put fairly and squarely on the shoulders of Indian politicians. He was glad that Sir Stafford Cripps made it plain that the present Interim Government could at any time be replaced by a Government of Indian politicians and he hoped that would take place before long. All, he said, felt goodwill towards India.

Mr. *Davies* (Labour), who was in India in February, said that he was not so much concerned about politicians in India as about raising the general standard of life. "The whole of Asia is on the move and the king-pin in any design for the future is India. What happens to India in the next few years will completely control the destiny of the Pacific and the entire Far East," he said.

Lt.-Col. *Lord J. Hope* (Conservative), son of the former Viceroy Lord Linlithgow, said that it was the general wish of the House that India should not be a party matter. He hoped that those who led Indian opinion would rise to their great responsibility which was now imminently upon them.

Mr. *William Gallacher* (Communist) said that it was only 20 years since the very prominent leader of the Conservatives, Lord Brentford (late Joynson-Hicks) declared : "We have won India by the sword and by the sword we will rule it" to the cheers of Conservatives. That was Conservative policy. Mr. Gallacher advised the Government to withdraw the Caretaker Government, put the responsibility on the Congress and the Muslim League to co-operate in forming a Government and withdraw all British troops and interference.

Mr. *Richard Butler* (Conservative), former Under-Secretary for India, said that the Mission's decision to cast the whole of the Depressed Classes seats into the General seats was a retrograde step and a major question of first importance. Mr. Butler said : "We desire to encourage India to achieve self-government", but fulfilment of British rule meant carrying out certain obligations. In the Autumn debate, attention would have to be paid not least to the minorities, the Indian States, and the carrying out of Britain's word.

MR. A. V. ALEXANDER'S REPLY TO DEBATE

Mr. *Albert Alexander*, First Lord of the Admiralty, winding up the debate, said he did not complain about Mr. Churchill's speech because they expected that kind of speech from him. Apart from Mr. Butler's defence of Mr. Churchill, all other Opposition members who had spoken, seemed to have disagreed with him, Mr. Alexander said.

He added: "To say we have made divergence from 1942 is really spliting hairs. What is really the difference in the negotiations we have been trying to conduct between saying, 'Will you choose to be within the British Commonwealth now or choose independence now, or 'Will you choose to opt out now ?"

Mr. *Churchill*: "If I am tackled on this question, I would say there is all the difference in the world. The Statute of Westminster allows to every Dominion the right to secede. If it is raised by a great many Dominions there would be no difficulty about it. But there may be a great difference of opinion, if one of the Dominions has a proposal for secession raised. That might exercise a great deterrent on the decision which a Dominion would take and my hope would be that such a deterrent would have the effect of making a Dominion unitedly to decide to remain in the British Commonwealth—a result which I hope we have not altogether brushed aside. When we short-circuit the process and say to them: "Take independence now, don't blind yourself to the idea that there is going to be any resignation on the part of the House you are now dealing with in taking full and immediate independence. It is well-known that I have differed in the past years from the line taken by the Conservative Government and I do not think we would be in this miserable plight to-day if my advice had been taken then."

Mr. *Alexander* continued: "I quite understand Mr. Churchill's point of view.

He is concerned, as many of us are, to extend in every possible way that great circle of free, but completely independent nations within the British Commonwealth and no one would welcome that more, as the Prime Minister had stated, than those who sit on these (Government benches)".

1942 APPROACH OUT OF DATE

Mr. Alexander observed that events had travelled since 1942 and it could not be controverted that for the Cabinet Mission to have approached the problem from the point of view of the situation as it was in 1942 would have meant that we would have come back with the same failure."

Mr. Alexander said that he regretted to hear Mr. Churchill speak as if the offer of 1942 was only made when the enemy were at the gates. That was the very complaint which Indians made in their expression of doubt about British *bona fides.* He certainly did not think that all members of the Government in 1942 made the offer to India on that basis. "But, at the present time," Mr. Alexander said, "we have to deal with a situation when there is political awakening throughout the world, and especially in the East, and if some attempt had not been made to get the agreement we have so far secured in India. I am certain that we should have faced a position of uprising of bloodshed and disturbances in India already, and with a future military commitment that no one could at the present time forecast."

"MAJORITY OF DEPRESSED CLASSES BEHIND CONGRESS"

Mr. Alexander referred to points which, he said, Mr. Churchill had raised about the minorities. The kind of argument which Mr. Churchill used, he said, was leading them to think that, if they added the total number of present minorities together, that would make a majority in India and that would be a reason for not accepting the Prime Minister's statement that ultimately, the minorities ought not to be allowed to prevent the progress of the majority. In fact, if they took the total figures of the minorities—Muslims, Depressed Classes, Indian Christians, Sikhs and Anglo-Indians—and added them all together they could make that kind of case. But, if they went through all the minorities, they must subtract from them all the millions in or behind the Congress party. His experience in the last three months demonstrated that the majority of the Depressed Classes, for example, were behind the Congress.

Mr. *Godfrey Nicholson* (Conservative) intervened to ask whether they were not departing from the spirit of the debate which had been intended to-day.

Mr. Alexander said that he was most anxious not to depart from the spirit of the debate, but he did not want to allow the impression to go out that the question of the minorities was not a matter of concern to the Government or the House. Mr. Alexander, replying to a further intervention, said that his experience in the last three months demonstrated that the majority of the Depressed Classed were with the Congress and behind the Congress. Mr. Alexander said that the Congress secured from the Depressed Classes a very large number of efficient candidates for representation of the Assembly. Mr. Butler, he said, could raise this matter in more detail during the October debate.

He agreed very much with the tributes paid to the Indians' voluntary war effort and to the two million Indians in the great struggle thas they were in with Britain for freedom and liberty. But the British were not offering this independence and freedom to India, simply because they had done Britain a great military service.

"We give it on the basis of its being our own birthright in this country and the birth-night we desire to see given to men and women in all parts of the world. Although we are very much misunderstood from time to time in the different parts of the world, the ultimate end of British rule should be to bring independence and freedom to the peoples with whom we have been associated. It is in promotion of that spirit that we have taken our Mission to India. We believe that we have got to a position where although there are many difficulties to be overcome, providing the main parts will combine in working the constitution-making machinery, there is no reason why we should not make rapid and substantial progress to the complete freedom of that great subcontinent for whom this nation wishes nothing but good".

The debate then ended. There was no question of vote.

Muslim League Rejects Cabinet Plan

Council Meeting—Bombay—27th. July to 29th. July, 1946

Mr. Jinnah Reviews Developments

The session of the All-India Muslim League Council, called to reconsider the League's attitude to the Cabinet Mission's proposals for India, began at Bombay on the 27th. July, 1946.

About 450 delegates attended the session and the hall was packed with delegates, visitors and Pressmen, both Indian and foreign.

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, opening the session, said that what had happened during the three-and-a-half months of constitutional negotiations and subsequently had convinced him that the Muslim League had no other course left open to it but to depend on its own strength and to adhere to its goal of Pakistan.

On the question of British Cabinet Mission's long term plan for India and the Constituent Assembly envisaged by it, Mr. Jinnah said that Congress acceptance of the plan and the Constituent Assembly has been conditional and not actually a full acceptance. It was the attitude of the Congress which had created the necessity of reconsidering the decision of the League Council accepting the proposals.

Regarding the Interim Government arrangement, Mr. Jinnah reiterated that the British Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy had gone back on their word and had abandoned what was announced as their final proposals in their statement of June 16, in their eagerness to "please the Congress."

In his opening speech, Mr. Jinnah told the delegates that they had been summoned for certain specific purpose of great importance. The first was to decide what new course the Muslim League should adopt with regard to the Cabinet Mission's long term proposals, while the second purpose was to decide the League's attitude to the proposals about the Interim Government.

Mr. Jinnah referred to the Press conference held by Pandit Nehru in Bombay after he assumed office as Congress President. Mr. Jinnah emphasized that Pandit Nehru had made it clear that the Congress was not bound either by paragraph 19 of the Cabinet Mission's statement with regard to the final grouping of the provinces, or by Paragraph 15. These paragraphs formed the main basis of the scheme so far as the Muslims were concerned.

It was precisely these paragraphs that were unequivocally repudiated by the Congress. Under Paragraph 15, the provinces had the right to opt out only after the will of the people had been ascertained under the new Constitutions in Groups "B" and "C". By repudiating these paragraphs, the Congress rejected not only the two basic provisions, but also the fundamentals of the scheme.

Mr. Jinnah asked what the remedy was if the Congress and the Constituent Assembly went beyond the scope of the plan because the Congress had a majority in the Constituent Assembly as a whole. It was hoping to take any decision it liked, ignoring, nullifying and repudiating the important parts of the scheme, and thinking it could act in a manner which was ultra vires of the rights and functions of the Constituent Assembly.

In spite of this, the Cabinet Mission, like a drowning man ready to get hold of a straw, had treated this conditional acceptance by the Congress as genuine. They had decided not only to propagate the view in this country but had created the same impression during the India debate in Parliament.

Referring to Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement in the House of Lords that the Indian parties could not go outside the terms of what had been laid down, as this would not be fair to the other parties. Mr. Jinnah said that this statement was a "pious" one. Nothing could be done if the Congress decided to go outside the plans laid down.

As regards Pandit Nehru's statement that the Constituent Assembly was a sovereign body, Mr. Jinnah said: "It is no use imagining things. The Constituent Assembly is not a sovereign body. Either we accept this view or not. If we accept that it is not a sovereign body, the only honourable course open to us is to treat it for what it is. It is an assembly summoned by the Viceroy, who has been appointed by the British Government. It is not going to be a sovereign body by any statement or show of bravado."

Coming to the Interim Government plan, Mr. Jinnah said that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy had gone back on their pledged word. Clause 3 of the statement of June 16 was based on the understanding that the Interim Government plan proposed by the Mission and the Viceroy was final and could not be changed. Mr. Jinnah said that it had been clear that the Congress Working Committee had rejected both the long-term and short-term proposals on the night of June 24. Early in the morning of June 25 Sir Stafford Cripps called on Mr. Gandhi and later in the day Lord Pethick-Lawrence had a talk with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. As a result of these interviews, Mr. Jinnah said, the Congress had been persuaded to accept the long-term proposals with their own interpretations, on the assurance that the Interim Government proposal would be abandoned.

Mr. Jinnah asked the Viceroy to give a satisfactory explanation of what he described as "a grave charge."

Mr. Jinnah said that he had not submitted any list to the Viceroy containing proposed names of Muslim League nominees for the Interim Government. He had made it clear to the Viceroy that he would not submit any list until an agreement had been reached with the Congress. If no agreement was reached the Viceroy was bound to set up the Interim Government with the one party willing to work it. Only then would he submit a list. The Viceroy had included his name in the panel of proposed members of the Interim Government without referring to him, Mr. Jinnah said.

If, Mr. Jinnah said, the Congress thought it could go into the Constituent Assembly by by-passing the League it was welcome to do so. The League would not be threatened by anything the Congress might do.

Summing up, Mr. Jinnah said that the Cabinet Mission had gone back on their pledged word and had played into the hands of the Congress. Under these circumstances, the Muslim League could not have any confidence in the Cabinet Mission or the British Government. The only course open to it would be to depend on its own strength. If the organization lacked strength, it had to be created. It was the only way to prevent the British Government allowing itself to be influenced by the Congress. Mr. Jinnah continuing said :—"The British Government can never be taken on their word. Within 10 days, the representatives of the British Government went back on their word. The Cabinet Mission tried its best to propitiate the goddess of the Congress and postponed the formation of the Interim Government. It has declared that the Congress had accepted the long-term proposals, which is not acceptance in the real sense of the term.

"Our motto should be discipline, unity and trust in the power of our own nation. If we do that, the Mission and the British Government may be rescued, released and freed from being cowed down by the threats of the Congress that they would launch a struggle and start non-co-operation."

Stating that all efforts of the Muslim League at fairplay, justice, even supplication and prayers have had no response of any kind from the Congress, Mr. Jinnah declared : "The Cabinet Mission has played into the hands of the Congress. It has played a game of its own.

"I tell you the Congress has done the greatest harm to the people of India, in which the Caste Hindus are in an overwhelming majority, by its pettifogging, haggling attitude during the recent constitutional negotiations. The Congress is full of spite towards the Muslims. It has now taken India back 40 years by enabling a completely bureaucratic and autocratic Government to be set up at Delhi.

"The Congress thinks that it is going to walk into the Interim Government and bypass the Muslim League. It is welcome to go there We are not frightened by that and we know how to deal with that. They are talking through their hats when they talk of turning the Constituent Assembly into a sovereign body—the Constituent Assembly that is being summoned by the Viceroy appointed by the British Government. It is going to be turned into a sovereign body by the bravado and childish statements of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Quoting extracts from the Congress President's letter of June 25 to the Cabinet Mission and the Congress Working Committee's resolution of June 26, Mr. Jinnah said Congress acceptance was conditional. "Any man of common sense can come to the conclusion only, leave alone these great politicians. It is surprising that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy should consider this decision as acceptance. Throughout these negotiations the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy were under terror and threats of the Congress."

The Council had also to consider what steps should be taken by the Muslim League in view of the attitude adopted by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy in regard to the Interim Government. Mr. Jinnah said: "They have gone back on their plighted word and abandoned what was announced as their final proposals embodied in their statement of June 16."

Mr. Jinnah contended that the Congress really never accepted the long term plan. Its conditional acceptance was communicated to the Cabinet Mission by the Congress President on June 25 and was subsequently ratified by the AICC at its meeting in Bombay on July 7.

"The Cabinet Mission" Mr. Jinnah said, "like a drowning man ready to catch hold of a straw treated this conditional acceptance of the Congress as genuine acceptance. Not only did they try to propagate this view in this country but during the debate in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords both Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps created the impression that the Congress had accepted the long-term proposal. This impression is not based on facts. The Congress Working Committee's resolution was bad enough but Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as the elected President having taken charge of his office, at a Press conference in Bombay on July 10 made the policy and attitude of the Congress towards the long-term proposal clear. In that interview the Pandit made it quite clear that the Congress was committed to nothing and they were not bound by either Para 15 or Para 19 of the State Paper.

"BRUTE MAJORITY"

"Pandit Nehru has stated that the Congress was not bound by Para 19 of the State Paper which regulates Grouping and which also regulates the functions of the Constituent Assembly. The essential part of the scheme from the Muslim League point of view, is grouping B and C and it is that part of the scheme which has been unequivocally repudiated by the Congress which asserts that provinces in Groups B and C are free to opt out from the very beginning and not as is provided until the Group constitution and provincial constitutions are framed and elections are held under the new provincial constitutions."

Mr. Jinnah said that because the Congress had a "brute majority" in the whole of the Constituent Assembly it was hoping to take any decision it liked with its majority, ignoring, nullifying and repudiating every item of the scheme and act in a manner which would not be competent of the constituent Assembly and which would be ultra vires of the functions and rights of the body.

The Congress position in a nutshell was, Mr. Jinnah said, "we are committed to nothing and we are going to the Constituent Assembly to achieve our objective and according to our sweet will we will do what we like on the basis of the interpretation which have already been announced to the world." This, Mr. Jinnah said, had created a new situation necessitating the summoning of the League Council.

Mr. Jinnah referred to the Secretary of State's speech in the Lords debate when he declared that the Indian parties could not go outside the terms of what had been agreed to, as that would not be fair to the other parties.

Mr. Jinnah said: "Beyond this pious expression there is no effective check or remedy provided in the event of the Congress, which happens to have a brute majority in the Constituent Assembly, taking any decision which is ultra vires and incompetent of that Assembly. The Mission knew it. It was made clear to it that Congress acceptance was with reservations and with their own interpretations on some of the fundamentals of the scheme. Both Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan and myself had made this clear in our statements. The British Government were in possession of these details before the debate took place, yet Lord Pethick-Lawrence had contended himself with the pious expresssion of hope.

"Does this show any sense of responsibility or understanding on the part of the Cabinet Mission who spent here three and half months? Further, Pandit Nehru at a mass meeting at Delhi on July 23 said that if they could not mend the Constituent Assembly they would end it. When some papers attributed the Pandit's statements to this emotional and sentimental feelings, Pandit Nehru asserted, repeated and reaffirmed that he had said it deliberately and with a full sense of responsibility. He made it clear that the Congress would pursue that line and if necessary kill the Constituent Assembly."

Mr. Jinnah characterized Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement in the Lords that he had faith and hope in the Indian people doing the right thing as "most unconvincing optimis..." in view of the Congress stand.

"I feel we have exhausted all reasons. It is no use looking to any other source for help or assistance. There is no tribunal to which we can go. The only tribunal is the Muslim nation. (Cheers) It is no consolation to me that Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps have acknowledged that we made very substantial and vital concessions whereas the Congress had not budged an inch.

"I wish I could honestly pay a tribute to their courage and statesmanship which they so sadly lacked in handling these negotiations. Nor have I seen any signs of the slightest gesture of goodwill or conciliation or any indication of co-operation on the part of the Congress. I am confident the Muslims of India are not going to be perturbed nor are we going to suffer from any sense of frustration.

"I can tell you this without fear of contradiction that of the three parties, the Muslim League behaved throughout the negotiation as an honourable organization. We negotiated on high principles. We made concession after concession, not because we were overawed. We did so purely because of our extreme anxiety for an amicable and peaceful settlement which would lead not only the Muslims but also other communities inhabiting this sub-continent to the achievement of freedom. But the Congress stood there It has no other consideration except the one, namely, how to down the Muslim League.

"We worked with clean hands," Mr. Jinnah added. "The Muslim League is the only party that has emerged from these negotiations with honour and clean hands. The Mission went back on its words with regard to the Interim Government The Mission to-day is cowed down and paralysed. The Congress has resorted to methods that even an ordinary individual will be ashamed of. Have you (Congress) not got the decency and have you not got any sense of honour and courage to say that you cannot accept the proposals because they are opposed to your fundamental principles and your objectives?" asked Mr. Jinnah.

Demanding a categorial reply from the Viceroy, Mr. Jinnah asserted that on the night of June 24, the Congress Working Committee had rejected both the long-term and short-term proposals. "Earlier in the morning of June 25, the indefatigable Sir Stafford Cripps went and woke up Mr. Gandhi in the Bhangi Colony. It seems he did not cut much ice. He came back and Lord Pethick-Lawrence was put on the scent of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, the strongman of Congress. He waylaid Mr. Patel on the road and took him to his house and there they concocted a device. The Congress was persuaded to accept the long-term proposal even with their own interpretations and reservations and the Mission assured the Congress that it would abandon the Interim Government scheme of June 16. It is again like a drowning man catching at a straw. They wanted somehow or other to say that their mission was not a complete failure.

"This is exactly what happened. Now I ask the Viceroy to issue a statement, giving a categorial explanation on this point. This is a grave charge against the honour, integrity and character of the members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy.

"Pakistan only solution"

"All these prove clearly beyond a shadow of doubt that the only solution of India's problem is Pakistan. (Cheers. So long as the Congress and Mr. Gandhi maintain that they represent the whole of India, so long as the Congress waste their money to no purpose but to create disruption among the Muslims and encourage men who have no sense of honour and morality by bribery, corruption and snobbery, so long as they deny true facts and the absolute truth that the Muslim League is the only authoritative organisation of the Muslims and as so long as they continue in this vicious circle, there can and will be no compromise or freedom."

Mr. Jinnah maintained that it was a "bogus claim" of the Congress that it represented the whole of India. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, out of 79 seats for Muslims, the Congress had secured only three. The candidate from the U.P. stood from three Muslim constituencies in the provincial elections and he was kicked out everywhere."

Attack on Mr. Gandhi

"Mr. Gandhi now speaks as an universal adviser. He says that the Congress represents the whole of India and that the Congress is the trustee for the people of India. It is an alarming status he wants. We have enough experience of one trustee that has been here for 150 years. We do not want the Congress to become our trustee. We have now grown up (Laughter). The only trustee of the Muslims is the Muslim nation. Mr. Gandhi is the self-appointed trustee of the Harijans. Does he honestly believe that the Harijans have confidence in him? The Harijans are a blot on any civilized community. Sixty millions of them who have been tied down by social and economic tyranny for centuries have been living in a miserable condition. What has Mr. Gandhi done to them since he assumed charge of the welfare of the Harijans? The Scheduled Castes are now offering satyagrah and going to jail. People do not and will not take to these extreme measures unless there is strong feeling and strong grievance. The Mission has betrayed the Harijans in order to appease the goddess of the Congress."

Mr. Jinnah proceeded to explain fn defail the negotiations regarding the setting up of an Interim Government. He said : "It is entirely untrue that I submitted any list on behalf of the Muslim League. On the contrary I definitely said that I was not prepared to submit any list until I knew that there was an agreed settlement and if there was no agreed settlement, the Viceroy was bound to go ahead with one major party that accepted it and that I would submit my list at that stage. The Viceroy had no business to put my name when I had clearly made it known to him, in spite of his trying to persuade me, that I would not accept any office so long as I was the President of the Muslim League.

"Immediately the Congress gave its reply, we have our reply. Now we are told that clause 8 means something which it does not mean. Here I must say that Sir Stafford Cripps, when he was questioned in the House of Commons, found it very difficult to wriggle out of it and he resorted to jugglery of words and misleading the house. I am sorry to say that Sir S. Cripps debased his legal talents and put this dishonest interpretation on this clause. He overpowered the venerable and idealistic Secretary of State."

Mr. Jinnah deplored that too much prominence had been given to the interview he had with the Mission on June 25. The Viceroy received the Congress reply at about 11 or 12 noon that day. It had not been stated anywhere that we were time-barred in accepting the proposal. It was not stated that the offer had been withdrawn. Of course they would have been entitled to withdraw the offer had both parties not accepted the offer. A fantastic and dishonest construction was put on the clause "by that ingenuous juggler of words, Cripps, to evade the formation of the Interim Government"

Mr. Jinnah criticized Lord Pethik Lawrence's statement that he (Mr. Jinnah) could not have a monopoly of Muslim nomination. "I am not a trader." Mr. Jinnah said. "I am not asking for concessions for oil nor am I higgling and haggling like a banya. Is it not absurd for the Secretary of State for India to come out with this phraseology. Are the Muslims a commodity ?"

Mr. Jinnah maintained that right from the beginning he had objected to the inclusion of "squisling Muslims" in the Interim Government. The Viceroy himself had in his letter to the Congress President on June 22, stated that he would not have any non-League Muslim. If Mr. Jinnah had that monopoly then, he asked, did he lose it after two days. The reason was the Congress did not accept it.

Mr. Jinnah thought that the Congress had acted throughout in a petty manner and their objective was to discredit and humiliate the Muslim League. If the Congress was really a national body representing the whole of India, then why should it bestow its attention only on the Muslim and not on other communities ?

Night Session

When the Council resumed its session at 9-30 at night, Mr. Jinnah announced that there were several resolutions tabled for discussion by members of the Council. Mr. Jinnah said that in view of the Cabinet Mission having gone back on their word on the question of setting up an Interim Government, the League Council had to decide what steps they had to take.

"We have accepted the proposals—both the long-term and short-term. And now the vital questions are first: What are you going to do with that decision of yours ? Is that decision to be scrapped and modified and in what way ?" The second question was what the League Council had now to say about the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy, who had gone back on their own words.

Since the scheme of Interim Government had been scrapped, what was left was only the long-term proposals and the Council had to decide what they would now do with these. "Do you want to scrap it or modify it ?" Mr. Jinnah urged the members to confine themselves to these two points in their speeches.

Over a dozen resolutions, which had been tabled by the League Council members, varied from total rejection of the Cabinet Delegation's proposals and the launching of an immediate struggle for the achievement of Pakistan to acceptance strictly on the basis of parity in all matters relating to the constitution-making Body and the future Union Government.

After all these resolutions had been read out by Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary, a general discussion began.

SIR F. K. NOON'S THREAT

Initiating the debate, *Sir Feroze Khan Noon* said the Congress was responsible for the official Executive Council functioning at the Centre to-day. "If the Congress thinks that this Executive Council is short-lived, they are very much mistaken. In the absence of an agreement between the major parties in the country, it might continue for 10 or 15 years."

Sir Feroze pointed out that it was in the interest of the British to keep this official Executive Council in power to continue the economic exploitation of the country. "Let the Congress realise that the British owes India 1,500 crores of rupees by way of sterling debts. There is an economic drain on the country, which will never be known to the world unless the Government wanted to tell them. Fourteen annas out of every rupee thus drained would go from the Congress and the Hindus.

"If the Congress was thinking of getting into the Executive Council without the League, let them do it. We shall stand aside. Let us see how they work it. They will not be able to work it for a day."

Sir Feroze Khan Noon counselled the League to keep out of the Constituent Assembly as well in the same manner. "The long-term proposals are nothing but a trick to keep us busy quarrelling with each other for the next fifteen years. The British Government wants peace in India for the next four years while they are in power, and the most convenient device is to keep us engaged for sometime with some proposals."

Sir Feroze pleaded for an understanding between the Congress and the Muslim League without which there was no use going into the Constituent Assembly. "Unless we have an agreement out of court, it will be most futile, foolish and suicidal for the Muslims to go into it. (Cheers.) We are not going there merely to be out-voted."

ALTERNATIVES BEFORE LEAGUE

Having accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposals, there were two alternatives now before the League. "If the Congress do not agree out of court with us, we can go into the Constituent Assembly but not take part in the Union part of it. The Muslims can draw up a constitution for Pakistan and the Hindus for Akhand Hindusthan. But then both these will go to London and probably remain in the archives there for ever. But even this will be dangerous for the Muslims, because the British Government will pick out some weak points and as self-styled arbitrators press something else on us.

"The best for us is frankly to admit that we made a mistake in accepting the Union of some sort proposed in the scheme and go back to our Pakistan ideal (Cheers.) The path of wisdom lies in the total rejection of the constitutional proposals. We will sit quiet and do nothing until the Congress has made the British quit. We shall eliminate ourselves for the time being, for, somebody has got to make sacrifices to achieve freedom for the country. We, Musalmans, shall sacrifice, if we want freedom for ourselves, when we know that neither Britisher nor the Hindu is willing to make us free. From our own point of view, it is better we fight one of them. When the Congress has turned out the Englishman, we will know how to fight the Congress. (Cheers.) Brave can never be ruled by others. (Renewed cheers).

Sir Feroze Khan Noon stated the Muslim League has committed "a great mistake in putting our cards on the table as straight and honest men dealing with men whose words we trusted and whose intentions could not be doubted. The second mistake was when we departed from our ideal of Pakistan, a completely sovereign State for the Muslims of India, the issue on which we fought and won the elections. Ever since, we have fallen lower and lower. If you depart from the ideal, your movement will be dead in five years. Whatever programme we made for our future political progress, therefore, let there be one guiding beacon before us—a full sovereign, separate State of Pakistan. (Cheers.) If at any time we felt that we were willing for a partial Union at the Centre, that was only a stepping stone twards Pakistan.

Sir Feroze uttered a warning that if the British Cabinet Ministers had gone back on their words once, they would do it again in respect of the long-term proposals. "Those very Congress threats which frightened them will again weigh with them with regard to the constitutional long-term agreement. You cannot look into the present Government in Britain for the protection of your rights. That door is closed, so far as we are concerned. Our future does not lie in the hands of the British."

Demand for Withdrawing League Support

Moulana Hazrat Mohani moved his resolution suggesting that the Muslim League acceptance of the Mission's proposals be withdrawn. The Moulana said there was no more room for any negotiations with men who had broken their plighted work. The time had come for revolutionary action. The Muslim League must revert back to the demand for sovereign Pakistan and devise suitable measures for its achievement. Moulana Hazrat Mohani suggested that the Muslim members elected to the Constituent Assembly be asked to form themselves into a committee of Action for the purpose. If the Quaid-e-Azam will only give his word, the Muslims of India will rise in revolt at a moment's notice," he added amidst cheers.

Moulana Karam Ali moved a resolution demanding the immediate launching of a struggle against the British. "There is no other course left open to the Muslims. We should not go into the Constituent Assembly." Maulana Karam Ali also suggested that the Muslims should begin an immediate boycott of British goods.

Dr. *Abdul Hamid Kazi* urged that any settlement now with the Congress should be based on the principle of parity between the Congress and Muslim League in the proposed Interim Government, the Hindus and Muslims in the Constituent Assembly and in the Union Government and in the Union Legislature when it was formed. The Muslims, he said, were not going to trust the Hindu Congress, who were given to petty bargaining, any more than they would trust the British Government. He did not agree with Sir Feroze Khan Noon that the Muslims should stand aside and let the Hindus settle with the British. "The Muslims must come into the field now and fight for independence—independence not only for Pakistan, but for Hidusthan as well. After wresting power from the British for the whole of the country, the Muslims should establish their own Government in the Pakistan areas and make a free gift of the other three-fourths of the country to the Hindus. (Cheers.)

Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin suggested that the Muslims should begin with renouncing their titles and pursuing a more active political programme. He added that Mr Jinnah should give a directive to the Muslim nation to renounce their titles from the British Government. This would only be the first step, and the people should be prepared for further sacrifices.

Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan (Punjab) condemned the "militant and aggressive attitude" of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and said that the Congress with its overwhelming majority in the Constituent Assembly hoped to crush the Muslim League. Muslims could not rely on the promises of the British but should develop their own inherent strength and fight for the achievement of Pakistan. He advocated direct action, but as to when and in what manner it should be launched, should be left to the League Working Committee. If Mr. Jinnah gave the call, Raja Ghaznafar Ali said, Muslims from all walks of life would come forward to carry on the strugle for the attainment of Pakistan.

The session adjourned at midnight.

Second Day—Bombay—28th. July 1946

Discussion on what attitude the Muslim League should adopt in view of the "new situation that has been created" was continued at the resumed session of the League Council this morning.

Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah, Premier of Sindh , Sir Azizul Haque, former member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and Mian Iftikaruddin Ahmed (Punjab) were the principal speakers to-day. Sir Ghulam Hussain said that the time had now come for the league to take some action instead of indulging in speeches.

Sir Azizul Haque said that the decision of the All India Muslim League Council in June last to accept the British Cabinet Mission's proposal was not a mistake as Sir Firoze Khan Noon had said last night. The decision of the Muslim League to accept the proposal was a great act of statesmanship.

Fatima Begum (Punjab), the first speaker this morning, assured the whole-hearted support of the Muslim women to any programme of direct action that might be launched by the Muslim League. "Since the advent of the thought of the Constituent Assembly, the Muslims had forgotten their demand for Pakistan. They are under a great delusion if they think they can afford to forget Pakistan" she declared.

Mr. Tamizuddin Khan (Bengal) warned the Council against taking any precipitate action and asked them not to allow anger and passion to influence their decision. He suggested that the Muslim League President, Mr. Jinnah, be authorised to deal with the present situation as well as any other situation that might arise in the future as he thought fit and also to withdraw the League acceptance of the long-term proposals if found necessary. This in his opinion would be the proper course for the Council to adopt.

Mr. Jinnah intervened in the debate at this stage and said that while he appreciated the high esteem and confidence placed in him, he would like the Council to decide the future course of action. "Mr. Tamizuddin Khan's suggestion shifts your responsibility on to my shoulders. I want you to take your own decision after ascertaining all the facts, which I have placed before you," he said. "It is true the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy have betrayed the Muslim nation. We accepted their proposal as a whole, both long-term and short term. But since they have scrapped the interim proposals, you have to decide what we should now do, for the proposals are interdependent and inseparable. "Of the three parties to the proposals, the Delegation and the Viceroy have scrapped the interim proposals. The Congress, one of the two major parties, has accepted the plan conditionally, which is no acceptance at all. What security is there for the League to go into the Constituent Assembly when the other major party has not accepted it and the third party scraps a vital part of the proposals and says, 'We have faith, hope and confidence in the Indians doing the right thing?

"I am not prepared to accept responsibility for any decision as to the future, unless you force it down my thought. It is your bounden duty to decide what we should now do, for you are the parliament of the Muslim nation. The president and the Working Committee will carry out any policy laid down by you."

Mian Iftikharuddin appealed to the Congress to observe the rules of the game in working the constituent assembly and not to go beyond the scope of the British Cabinet Mission's proposals. Unless the Congress agreed to work hand in hand with the League, the constitutional problem would never be solved. By accepting the British Cabinet Mission's proposals, Main Iftikharuddin added the League had given up its demand for sovereign Pakistan. Now it was for the Congress to reciprocate this gesture.

Mian Abdul Haye supported the plea for immediate direct action by the League. He said while denying to Mr. Jinnah the right to nominate all the Muslims in the Interim Government, the Secretary of State for India had repudiated the representative character of the League.

Mr. Abdul Hassan said Muslims should resist the attempts by the Congress in the name of freedom and liberty to dominate over them. He wanted the league to forge sanction for any demand they might make and said there should be sovereignty in the groups.

Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan, voicing the young Muslims' point of view, said that Muslim India supported the League Council's decision to accept the Cabinet Mission's proposals in the hope that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would join the League in fighting British Imperialism. He said it had now become clear that the Congress was not against British Imperialism but against the Muslims. He said the Muslims should not fight on two fronts. They should first fight the British, and if the Congress allied itself with the British then the Congress too would have to be fought. The League should go to the Constituent Assembly and there prove the justice of its case. If the Congress were to refuse the claims of the Muslims, the Muslim members in the Constituent Assembly should sit and frame their own constitution for Pakistan.

The Council adjourned at 1-20 p.m. Before adjourning the House, Mr. Jinnah announced that the Working Committee would draft a resolution on the lines of the views expressed in the Council and would place it before the House on the next day.

Third Day—Bombay—29th. July 1946

League Rejects Cabinet Plan

The League Council unanimously decided to-day to reverse its Delhi decision accepting the Cabinet Mission's scheme embodied in the State Paper of May 16 last. The Council's decision, which means that the Muslim League will not participate in the proposed Constituent Assembly, was taken on a resolution placed before it by the Working Committee of the League. The resolution was presented to the Council at half past twelve to-day after the Council had been in session for two hours.

Mr. *Jinnah* announced to the Council that after a great deal of consideration the Working Committee had decided to withdraw the League's acceptance of the Cabinet Delegation's proposals. He said that the decision had been taken after "full consideration of all aspects" and added, "We spent considerable time in preparing the draft resolution."

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, General Secretary of the Muslim League, moved the resolution.

By another resolution the League plans starting direct action "to achieve Pakistan and assert their just rights and vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present slavery under the 'British and contemplated future Caste Hindu domination.

Both the resolutions were unanimously passed by the Council.

The resolution regarding direct action *inter alia* says 'as a token of their deep resentment at the attitude of the British towards the Muslims, the Musalmans have been asked to renounce their titles forthwith conferred by this alien Government."

After the two resolutions had been unanimously passed by the League Council, Mr. Jinnah addressed the Council.

Mr. Jinnah concluded his half hour's speech with the words, "Now let us march on" and quoted the Persian poet Firdausi for his motto, "We don't want war but if you want it we accept it unhesitatingly."

Immediately after the Council had passed the two resolutions before the House, a number of top-ranking Muslim Leaguers and others attending the session announced that they had renounced the titles that had been conferred on them by the British Government, as required under the terms of the second resolution. These included Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, the Sind Premier, Sir Nazimuddin, ex-Premier of Bengal, Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Nawab Sir Mehr Shah (Panjab), Sir M. Saadullah, ex-Premier of Assam, Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Khuhro, Minister, Sind.

Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin (N.W.F.P.) was the first to ascend the platform and surrender his title. Others who surrendered their titles were Khan Bahadur Haji Hasan Ali Ibrahim (Bombay), Khan Bahadur Karamat Ali, Khan Saheb Alibhai Patel (Bombay), Khan Bahadur Amjad Ali, Khan Bahadur Abdullah-al-Mahmud (Bengal), Mr. Hasan Ispahani (M.B.E.)

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali, General Secretary of the League, announced that although the prefix Nawabzada to his name was not a title conferred by the British Government he wanted to be addressed only as Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan.

Frenzied cheers broke out as each of the above Muslim Leaguers announced the surrender of his title and Mr. Jinnah had to intervene and say that he shared the joy of the house in the surrender of the titles but he wanted it to be done in a disciplined manner.

Rejection of Cabinet Plan

The following is the text of the resolution rejecting the Cabinet Mission's preposals :

On the 6th of June 1946, the Council of the All-India Muslim League accepted the scheme embodied in the Statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy dated 16th May, 1946, and explained by them in their statement dated 25th May, 1946. The scheme of the Cabinet Delegation fell far short of the demand of the Muslim nation for the immediate establishment of an independent and fully sovereign state of Pakistan comprising the six Muslim provinces, but the Council accepted a Union Centre for ten years strictly confined to three subjects viz., Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications, since the scheme laid down certain fundamentals and safeguards and provided for the grouping separately of the six Muslim provinces in sections B and C for the purpose of framing their provincial and group constitutions unfettered by the Union in any way and also with a view to end the Hindu Muslim deadlock peacefully and accelerate the attainment of freedom of the peoples of India.

In arriving at this decision the Council was also greatly influenced by the statement of the President which he made with the authority of the Viceroy that the Interim Government which was an integral part of the Mission's Scheme was going to be formed on the basis of a formula viz., five Muslim League, five Congress, one Sikh and one Indian Christian or Anglo-Indian, the most important portfolios to be distributed equally between the major parties, the Muslim League and the Congress. The Council authorised the President to take such decision and action with regard to further details of setting up the Interim Government as he deemed fit and proper. In that very resolution the Council also reserved the right to modify and revise this policy if the course of events so required.

British Government's "Breach of faith"

The British Government have committed a breach of faith with the Muslim League in that the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy went back on the original formula of 5 : 5 : 2 for setting up the Interim Government to placate the Congress. The Viceroy, having gone back on the original formula upon the faith of which the Muslim League Council came to their decision on June 6, suggested a new basis of 5 : 5 : 3 and after carrying on considerable negotiations with the Congress and having failed to get the Congress to agree intimated to the parties on June 15, that he and the Cabinet Delegation would issue their final statement with regard to the setting up of the Interim Government. Accordingly on June 16, the President of the Muslim League received a statement embodying what was announced to be the final decision for setting up the Interim Government by the Viceroy, making it clear that if either of the two major parties refused to accept the statement of June 16, the Viceroy would proceed to form the Interim Government with the major party accepting it and such other representatives as were willing to join. This was explicitly laid down in paragraph 8 of the Statement of June 16.

Even the final decision of the Cabinet Mission of June 16 with regard to the formation of the Interim Government was rejected by the Congress, the Muslim League definitely accepted it—although it was different from the original formula i.e. 5 : 5 : 2—because the Viceroy provided safe-guards and gave other assurances which are in his letter dated June 20, 1946.

The Viceroy however scrapped the proposal of June 16 and postponed the formation of the Interim Government on the plea concocted by the legalistic talents of the Cabinet Mission putting a most fantastic and dishonest construction upon paragraph 8 of the statement to the effect that as both major parties, i.e. the Muslim League and the Congress, had accepted the statement of May 16, the question of the Interim Government could only be taken up in consultation with the representatives of both the parties de novo.

Congress Attitude to the Constituent Assembly

Even assuming that this construction was tenable, for which there is no warrant, the Congress, by their conditional acceptance, with reservations and interpretation of their own, as laid down in the letter of the President of the Congress dated June 25 and the resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress passed at Delhi on June 26, repudiating the very fundamentals of the scheme had, in fact, rejected the statement of May 16 and therefore in no event there was any justification whatsoever for abandoning the final proposal of June 16.

As regards the proposal embodied in the statements of May 16 and 25 of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy, the Muslim League alone of the two major parties had accepted it.

The Congress have not accepted it because their acceptance is conditional and subject to their own interpretations which is contrary to the authoritative statement of the Delegation and the Viceroy issued on May 16 and 25. The Congress have made it clear that they do not accept any of the terms or the fundamentals of the scheme but that they have agreed only to go into the Constituent Assembly and to nothing else, and that the Constituent Assembly is a sovereign body and can take such decisions as it may think proper in total disregard of the terms and the basis on which it is to be set up. Subsequently they made this further clear beyond doubt in the speeches that were made at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on July 6 by prominent members of the Congress and in the statement of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Congress, to a Press conference on July 10 in Bombay and then again even after the debate in Parliament in a public speech by him at Delhi on July 22.

The result is that, of the two major parties, the Muslim League alone has accepted the statements of May 16 and 25 according to the spirit and letter of the proposals embodied therein and in spite of the attention of the Secretary of State for India having been drawn to this situation by the statement of the President of the Muslim League of July 13 from Hyderabad (Deccan), neither Sir Stafford Cripps in the House of Commons, nor Lord Pethick-Lawrence in the House of Lords, in the course of the recent debate, have provided or suggested any means or machinery to

prevent the Constituent Assembly from taking decisions which would be *ultra vires* and not competent for the Assembly to do. The only reply to this matter that the Secretary of State gave was mere expression of a pious hope and the statement "that would not be fair to the other parties who go in."

Once the Constituent Assembly has been summoned and has met, there is no provision or power that could prevent any decision from being taken by the Congress with its overwhelming majority, which would not be competent for the Assembly to take or which would be *ultra vires* of it, and however repugnant it might be to the letter or the spirit of the scheme. It would rest entirely with the majority to take such decisions as they may think proper or suit them; and the Congress has already secured by sheer numbers an overwhelming Hindu caste majority and they will be in a position to use the Assembly in the manner in which they have already declared i.e. that they will wreck the basic form of the grouping of the provinces, and extend the scope, powers and subjects of the Union Centre, which is confined strictly to three specific subjects as laid down in paragraph 15 and provided for in paragraph 19 of the statement of May 16.

The Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy collectively and individually have stated several times that the basic principles were laid down to enable the major parties to join the Constituent Assembly and that the scheme cannot succeed unless it is worked in a spirit of co-operation. The attitude of the Congress clearly shows that these conditions precedent for the successful working of the constitution-making machinery do not exist. This fact, taken together with the policy of the British Government of sacrificing the interests of the Muslim nation and some other weaker sections of the peoples of India, particularly the Scheduled Castes, to appease the Congress and the way in which they have been going back on their oral and written solemn pledges and assurances given from time to time to the Muslims, leave no doubt that in these circumstances the participation of the Muslims in the proposed constitution-making machinary is fraught with danger and the Council therefore, hereby withdraws its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals which was communicated to the Secretary of State for India by the President of the Muslim League on June 6, 1946.

RESOLUTION ON DIRECT ACTION

The following is the text of the resolution on Direct Action:

Whereas the All-India Muslim League has to-day resolved to reject the proposals embodied in the statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy dated May 16, 1946, due to the intransigence of the Congress on the one hand and the breach of faith with the Muslims by the British Government on the other; and whereas Muslim India has exhausted without success all efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Indian problem by compromise and constitutional means; and whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up a Caste Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British and whereas recent events have shown that power politics and not justice and fairplay are deciding factors in Indian affairs; and whereas it has become abundantly clear that the Muslims of India would not rest content with anything less than the immediate establishment of an independent and full sovereign state of Pakistan and would resist any attempt to impose any constitution, long-term or short-term, or setting up of any Interim Government at the Centre without the approval and consent of the Muslim League, the Council of the All-India Muslim League is convinced that now the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan and assert their just rights and to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present slavery under the British and contemplated future Caste-Hindu domination. This Council calls upon the Muslim nation to stand to a man behind their sole representative organisation, the All-India Muslim League, and be ready for every sacrifice. This Council directs the Working Committee to prepare forthwith a programme of direct action to carry out the policy initiated above and to organise the Muslims for the coming struggle to be launched as and when necessary.

As a protest against and in token of their deep resentment of the attitude of the British, this Council calls upon the Muslims to renounce forthwith the title conferred upon them by the alien Government.

MR. JINNAH'S DEFENCE OF DECISION

Mr. *Jinnah*, amidst prolonged cheers, immediately after the House had unanimously passed the two resolutions, declared, "What we have done to-day is the most historic act in our history. Never have we in the whole history of the League done anything except by constitutional methods and by constitutionalism. But now we are obliged and forced into this position. This day we bid good-bye to constitutional methods.

Mr. Jinnah recalled that throughout the fateful negotiations with the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy, the other two parties, the British and the Congress held pistols in their hands the one of authority and arms and the other of mass struggle and non-co-operation. "To-day, we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it," he added.

Mr. Jinnah said that the decision to reject the proposals and to launch direct action had not been taken in haste, but was taken with a full sense of responsibility and after all deliberation that was humanly possible. "We mean it and realise every word of it. We do not believe in equivocation," declared Mr. Jinnah.

Mr. Jinnah continued that the Congress had accepted the proposals conditionally and the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy had committed a flagrant breach of faith. When the League accepted the proposals they did it deliberately and with full responsibility and they accepted the statement of May 16, the statement of May 25 and the original formula for the Interim Government. "I think that if there is any man who has got any self-respect or honesty or any sense of fairness and justice, he would say that the Muslim League was moved by higher and greater considerations than any other party in India". The League throughout the negotiations was moved by a sense of fairplay and sacrificed the full sovereignty of Pakistan at the altar of the Congress for securing the independence of the whole of India. They voluntarily delegated three subjects to the Union and by doing so did not commit a mistake. It was the higest order of statesmanship that the League displayed by making concessions.

Mr. Jinnah added : "I do not think that any responsible man will disagree with me that we were moved by a desire not to allow the situation to develop into bloodshed and civil war. This situation should be avoided, if possible. In our anxiety to try to come to a peaceful settlement with the other major party, we made this sacrifice of giving three subjects to the Centre and accepted a limited Pakistan. We offered this unequivocal sacrifice at the altar of the Congress."

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar from the Frontier Province, who was one of the Muslim League delegates to the Tripartite Conference at Simla, was the first to address the Council.

Sardar Nishtar said that though the Cabinet Mission's proposals fell short of the Muslim League's demands, it accepted them in order to prove to the world that it was not the League, which stood in the way of India's Independence. The Muslim League acted as an honourable and honest organisation and wanted to solve the Indian political deadlock by peaceful methods. The Congress, on the other hand, tried to dominate the Muslim League in whatever way it could. In view of all that had happened during the past three months, the Muslims had only two courses open. One was to continue to be under British Imperialism, which would be dishonourable. The other was to fight for the achievement of Pakistan. The Muslims were prepared to make every sacrifice for this purpose.

Sir Mohamed Saadullah, former Premier of Assam, said there was only one way out for the Muslims now and that was to keep their self-respect and withdraw their acceptance of the Mission's proposals.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Chief Minister of Bengal, made a fighting speech and expressed the hope that the Council would decide its future course of action in a spirit of freedom. Mr. Suhrawardy said that the Muslim League accepted the short-term and long-term proposals at Delhi with grave misgivings and in a spirit of oppression. The misgivings had unfortunately been justified now. He said that the Congress had already begun to carry out its "nefarious design" to convert the Constituent Assembly into a sovereign body. "We have learnt now that we cannot any more rely either on the professions of British friendliness or on the hope that the Congress will one day do justice to us. The Congress was out to destroy Muslim resurgence in this country. We await the clarion call of the Quaid-e-Azam. The Muslim nation has been straining at the leash. When we dispersed after the last session at Delhi, there was no enthusiasm amongst the Muslims. But now when we feel that we shall have to stand on our own legs and search our hearts for our own strength, mark the enthusiasm amongst the Muslims. Let the Congress beware that it is not going to fight just a handful of people fighting for power, but a nation which is struggling for its life and will secure that life (cheers). Let us contribute to the world the best and choicest of all that was taught to us one thousand four hundred years ago by the greatest teacher of mankind.

Syed Ali Akbar Shah (Sind) urged that any course of action chalked out to-day should be strictly in accordance with Islamic principles and traditions. This, they could not do if they remained subservient to the British or any other party. The Muslim League was not a body, as had been alleged time and again, of knights and zemindars; it was an expression of the united will of the Muslim masses. The Muslims would and were ready to fight for freedom to manage their own affairs.

Moulana Jamal Mia (U. P.) suggested that the members of the Muslim League Council, most of whom were in the Legislative Assemblies and Councils, must resign from these bodies. It would be a test of their sincerity.

Mr. *Qadiruddin*, President of the Delhi Provincial Muslim League, amidst applause, declared that Muslim India was unanimously of the view that the Cabinet Mission's proposals should be rejected *in toto*. He did not believe there would be any civil war in the country under the existing conditions. The Muslim struggle for Pakistan would be a rebellion against authority and would commence with the violation of existing laws. Mr. Qadiruddin appealed to the Muslim masses to organise themselves properly and select the right type of man to lead them in the struggle with a view to avoiding its turning into a haphazard movement.

Mr. *Hoosain Imam* (Bihar) said that the recent political negotiations with the British Ministers and the Congress had shown that the Muslim League had gone to the utmost limit to reach a compromise. This attitude was, however, being misinterpreted as weakness on their part. Declaring that there was no other course but to launch a struggle, Mr. Hoosain Imam concluded : "To-day is a red-letter day in the history of the Muslim nation. The vital decision to launch a struggle against all the forces that stand in our way of achieving Pakistan would be taken to-day".

Chowdhury Khaliquazzaman, member of the Working Committee, in a brief speech asserted that during the negotiations that took place in Delhi and Simla, the Congress had completely exposed itself by demonstrating that its only aim was to down the Muslim League. On the other hand the Muslim League worked honestly and sincerely for the freedom of India. The Congress wanted to reject the proposals but had not had the moral couraga to do so and took up a position of neither acceptance nor rejection. The Muslim League, which had the courage to accept the plan, had now the courage to reject it as well. (Cheers). The Muslim League having now decided to reject it. he had no doubt that every Muslim would obey the orders of the Working Committee and Mr. Jinnah.

Intervening in the debate, Mr. *Jinnah* said that already twenty-three speakers had participated in the proceedings and he believed all viewpoints had been put forward. He and the members of the Working Committee sat late last night and discussed at length the draft resolutions, but the final draft was settled just then at the meeting itself. As they had fully expressed their views he did not believe any further debate was necessary.

Almost all the speeches were emphatic in their attack against the Cabinet Mission and Congress. "I think I am putting the sense of the House correctly that we should withdraw our acceptance of the long-term proposal as contained in our resoluation of June 6, communicated to the Cabinet Mission and Viceroy." (Prolonged cheer). Mr. Jinnah said that the draft resolutions would be placed before the Council and invited members to speak on it if there was any ground for rejection which had escaped notice.

The Council agreed to closure and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan read out the resolutions.

Mr, *Jinnah*, in his concluding address to the session,referred to the significance of the resolutions passed that day. Recounting the League's stand during the constitutional negotiations, he claimed that the League, in its anxiety to come to a peaceful settlement. had made the sacrifice of giving three subjects to the Centre and accepting a limited Pakistan.

"But this has been treated vith defiance and contempt. Then, are we alone to be guided by reason, justice, honesty and fairplay when, on the other hand, there is perfidious dealings by the Congress?" he asked. "There was no sign or the slightest gesture of compromise from them. But honour, honesty, statesmanship, justice and fairplay always win in the long run, and I might say that to-day Muslim India—if there is still any doubt left—is stirred as never before and has never felt so bitterly as to-day, because these two parties (Congress and the British) showed lack of statesmanship. But now we realise that this has been for Muslim India the greatest blessing in disguise. We have learnt a bitter lesson—the bitterest I think so far. Now there is no room left for compromise. Let us march on."

Mr. Jinnah than referred to Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement in the House of Lords that he could not agree to Mr. Jinnah having a monopoly over Muslim nominations. "What made the Secretary of State in the responsible position that he holds use such a stupid phrase?" he asked, "Has he got the monopoly of every Brition? On what authority does he speak on behalf of the British people, having only 60 per cent of the people behind his Government? We cannot agree to a Quisling Muslim being nominated by the Congress to the Executive Council.

"What did the British Government do with their own Quislings like John Amery and Lord Haw Haw—hanged them. Many other Englishmen, who betrayed their country and became traitors, have been hanged for treason. It is impossible for me to agree to a Quisling being nominated."

Mr. Jinnah proceeded to say that the Cabinet Mission had been "intellectually paralysed" and their report to Parliament was not even honest to themselves and was devoid not only of political ethics, but every manner of principle and morality.

Immediately Mr. Jinnah had finished, one after another top-ranking Muslim League leaders ascended the platform and annonnced the renunciation of their titles.

The League session then concluded amidst cheering that lasted well over fifteen minutes.

"Direct Action Day"

The Working Commitee of the All-India Muslim League concluded its Bombay session on the 30th July after passing a number of resolutions on Indians in South Africa, Indians in Ceylon and on Palestine.

The committee fixed August 16 as the day for observing "Direct Action Day" throughout India. On that day the Committee called upon Mussalmans to suspend all business and hold public meetings and other demonstrations and reaffirm the two resolutions passed by the League Council yesterday.

The Committee of Action of the Muslim League was asked to prepare a detailed programme of direct action.

Mr. Jinnah Explains League Decision

New Charges against Congress

"We have done our best and any further initiative now must come either from the British Government or from the Congress," declared Mr. *Jinnah* addressing a Press conference at Bombay on the 31st July 1946.

Mr. Jinnah, who was reviewing the decision of the Council of the Muslim League, made it clear in answer to a question that the decision of the Muslim League to resort to direct action "is not a declaration of war against anybody. This resolution is nothing but a statement concerning the steps we propose to take for our self-preservation and self-defence."

Mr. Jinnah declined to indicate what the Muslim League would do in hypothetical circumstances, remarking that the situation would be met as it arose. He also declined to indicate the exact nature of the direct action which the League proposed to take and the steps the League Council of Action would take in that direction.

He reiterated his earlier declaration that Congress acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's plan envisaged in the Mission's statement of May 16 was not real acceptance, as it was conditional, and therefore amounted to rejection or at best a counter-offer.

Mr. Jinnah charged the Congress with making vigorous and secret preparations for launching a struggle, more fierce than the 1942 struggle, and said that secret instructions had gone out to Congressmen for this purpose. The help of INA personnel was being made to make the struggle effective, he said.

While both the British Government and the Congress were armed in their own way, one with fire weapons and the other with the threat of mass struggle, the Muslim League felt it was high time it also forged its own sanctions and got ready for struggle to enforce its demand for Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah revealed that he had received a communication from the Viceroy but declined to disclose its nature.

"We maintain," Mr. Jinnah said, "that the Congress has not accepted the scheme embodied in the Statement of May 16 and this is quite clear from the letter of the Congress President of June 25, which was incorporated and endorsed in the resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed at Delhi on June 26. The resolution was confirmed by the AICC on July 7 and it was abundantly made clear by the speeches of the outgoing President and the incoming President and other Congress leaders.

"Therefore we naturally thought that the situation was serious. In the meantime Pandit Nehru, after the conclusion of the deliberations of the AICC. made it clear on July 10 that the Congress was committed to nothing. He said that the Congress was going into the Constituent Assembly to turn it into a sovereign Assembly.

"Now the question is, not as it is sometimes suggested, that we are opposed to the Constituent Assembly. In fact, our demand has been that there should be two sovereign Constituent Assemblies for the obvious reason that if there is one sovereign Constituent Assembly it means that the majority of one nation, with their numerical superiority of three to one, would impose their decision upon the majority of the other nation."

LONG-TERM PLAN

Referring to the long-term plan Mr. Jinnah said : "We were not satisfied with it. In fact it was far more favourable to the Congress point of view than our point of view. The only question was whether to accept it or not. We accepted it. I repeat what I said before, that we accepted it with full knowledge and understanding without any kind of equivocation. Why did we do that?

"We made a tremendous sacrifice of accepting a limited Pakistan, that is, minus three subjects, Defence, Communications and Foreign Affairs. We were actuated by the welfare of every community inhabiting India and we felt that it will free us in the shortest possible time from foreign domination and also lead us all to the attainment and realization of our independence.

"We understood perfectly well what we were doing. That was one vital consideration.

"The other consideration was that we thought, even if we have to make a sacrifice, it is worth our while to do so to avoid strife, bloodshed, stalemates and deadlocks. We considered that an amicable and peaceful settlement was worth more and so we voluntarily and willingly delegated three subjects to the Union Centre.

"There is not the slightest doubt that after we did this the Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy went back on their word within ten days with regard to their proposal embodied in their Statement of June 16, which was announced to be final. They put the most fantastic and dishonest interpretation on Paragraph 8.

"I see now that they discovered a new world, that the proposals 'lapsed.' Why? Not because we, the Muslim League, did not accept the Statements of June 16 in time, but because the Congress accepted the Statement of May 16 and rejected the Statement of June 16. Paragraph 8 of the June 16 Statement sets forth only one of the terms. How on earth can you agree that, although the Muslim League accepted the proposal within the time limit fixed, the proposals lapsed?"

CONGRESS ACCUSED

Mr. Jinnah declined to discuss the details of the proposed direct action. He said : "I am not prepared to tell you that now."

Asked if the Muslim League would join hands with other anti-imperialist forces such as the Congress, Mr. Jinnah said : "The Congress direct action had not been against the British. Direct action by the Congress on various occasions, the last time in 1942, had been to coerce and blackmail the British to bypass the Muslim League and surrender to the Congress demands.

"That is exactly what it is doing now, and that is exactly what the Mission was overawed with. The Congress has asked the British to quit. How can it, with self-respect, accept an Interim Government which is going to be formed under the Act of 1919 ? It was willing to do that at Simla provided the League was kept down."

Asked if the resolutions adopted ruled out the scope for negotiations, Mr. Jinnah said: "What are the other nations doing? Armed to the teeth with atom bombs, are they not going on talking and discussing? Are they not, at the same time, going on with preparations? Is not the Government of India going on today with preparations to put down any party they like ? Why do you want me (the League) alone to sit with folded hands ? I am also going to make preparations to meet the situation as and when it arises."

Asked if the proposed direct action would be violent or non-violent, Mr. Jinnah said: "I am not going to discuss ethics."

Q: Is this decision irrevocable?

A: If you are a politician, you will not ask me this question.

To further questions, Mr. Jinnah replied: "In the direct action we envisaged we shall include any one who is willing to join us for the cause for which we may have to launch a struggle."

Q: Would you consider the possibility of making an approach to the Congress?

A: I have done my best and the initiative must now come either from the British Government or from the Congress.

Asked if he had any communication from the Viceroy relating to the formation of an Interim Government, Mr. Jinnah said he had received a communication, but declined to discuss the nature of the communication.

League Directive on "Direct Action"

The Great Calcutta Killing

The majority of the vast concourse of people, no less than forty lakhs of human beings, inhabiting Calcutta, betook themselves to bed on the night of 15th August without any inkling whatsoever of the terror and tragedy that was going to befall during the next few days. Nothing more than a vague uneasiness of mind was felt because of the open demonstrations to forcibly effect "complete hartal" by method and manner unmistakably hooliganism. But everyone thought that any troublesome exuberance of hooliganism 'zid' and 'zolum' would be speedily brought under control by effective police action. The average citizen of Calcutta, therefore, faced the "Great Killing" completely unprepared. In the following pages we give an account of the "Great Calcutta Killing" and the "Rape of Noakhali" which has been compiled from news published in the local press and the *Hindusthan Standard* of Calcutta.

First Day—Friday—16th August 1946

Amherst Street, Maniktala and Belliaghata Thana areas were the scenes of the first troubles. Hooligans were out in large numbers, with great display of Muslim League flags and carrying arms, weapons and deadly missiles. Police inaction' encouraged them to think that Pakistan was a sort of "hooligans" paradise' which had to become overnight an incontrovertibly "settled fact" under orders of the Quaid-e-Azam, and the Muslim League directives for observance of the "Direct Action" Day meant simply that the hooligans were at liberty to loot and do whatever they liked in respect of life, honour and property of all those who dared disobey their order. On the very morning of August 16 the startled citizens of Calcutta had good sense to get more and more confused about the meaning of Pakistan and the mode and manner of the demonstrations of "Direct Action" which in the remarkably mischievous absence of any check from the authorities appeared to be the only permissible League procedure for victory-inspiring conquest and propaganda.

One of the worst sufferers, among the Muslims who had consistently been opposed to the League, in Calcutta, was Mr. Syed Nausher Ali. "I distinctly remember," run his statement "that four or five days before August 16, a number of people went past my house at about 3-30 a.m. crying—'Finish Nausher Ali, enemy of the community.' I had heard similar slogans previously also. Reports of similar speeches and feeling reached me and I was warned by some friends against apprehended danger." Subsequent events proved that to the hooligans Mr. Nausher Ali was "fair sport" until he was rescued with his family by the police. It is also regrettable that beyond escorting him and his family to the nearest Amherst Street Police station, neither the police nor the Government would do anything to protect his house from the depredations of the hooligans, with the result that when, on August 24, Mr. Nausher Ali could go, with military pickets, to see the condition of his residence he found it "in a damaged condition with the Muslim League flag hoisted at the top and a notice on the gate "Muslim League Office."

Another battle over flags took place, on the same day, in the morning at a college hostel in eastern Calcutta where outsiders were alleged to have changed flags and fought openly. Guns were also alleged to have been used by apparently League-minded sympathisers. It was not, however, by the unlawful use of guns alone in this area, but also from the fact that "within a short time our lane (in the vicinity of that college) surprisingly turned into a battle front," that definite indications were obtained of a "pre-arraged plan" of action by enthusiastic participants in full accord with the prevalent spirit of those who attacked the college and hostel and fought over the symbolical flags. The fact that all of them were found to be "well equipped with deadly weapons" convinced a correspondent of the "*Hindusthan Standard*" (Sept. 23) that the "whole affair was according to a pre-arranged plan." From the report of the correspondent it appeared that throughout the day and night of the

16th August the hooligans under cover of the battle-cry: "Let us teach them the meaning of Pakistan", indulged in an orgy of loot and plunder in such a ferocious manner that on the morning of the next day the saner section of local residents voluntarily formed a peace committee to maintain law and order.

This area is one of the most important and the oldest in Calcutta. It contains the Sealdah Station, schools and colleges for boys and girls, the Science College and the prayer hall and residences of the late Keshab Chunder Sen, the great Brahmo religious reformer, and some of his most prominent followers. Under the same police station (Amherst Street) is also situated the residence of the late Raja Rammohan Roy, and other long-established residences of several other prominent figures of early Indian society—the harbingers of the blessings of western education in India—are also located.

"That the job of terrorising the people of Calcutta "to teach them the meaning of Pakistan" was left to the hooligans—some of them well-known externees who had long been ordered out of the city as incorrigibly dangerous goondas—is a fact too glaring to be disowned. It was a sad and tragic irony of "the coquetry of circumstances" that almost within an hour of a demonstration parade by Muslim college and school students (including girls) through a street in the Amherst Street Thana area, hooligans, who were ostensibly out to respond to the same call for Pakistan as had inspired the flower of Bengal's educated Muslim youth of both sexes, could or would do no better than set upon a poor defenceless family who had just arrived at a railway station in eastern Calcutta and were proceeding to cross the street and pouncing upon a young girl of eighteen summers, strip her and compel her to stand completely naked until she could be rescued. It was also a very significant circumstance that the "first victim" in this area to pay the extreme penalty of death for disobeying the hooligans' mandate in the name of Pakistan was—a Bengali belonging to the same religion as the hooligans themselves."

"The elaborate arrangments," wrote Mr. Tarakdas Banerjee, President, Nadia District Congress Committee describing his experiences in Calcutta after arrival at a railway station on the morning of the 16th August that "I found in front of the station on the day of the professed "Direct Action" of the Muslim League against British Imperialism, could by no means be construed as meant for peaceful observance of the day, nor could they be described as a full-fledged armed action against British Imperialism. A crowd of over one thousand fanatics, armed with big lathis, drawn daggers, iron rods and house-breaking implements and shouting slogans like "Larke Lange Pakistan" and "Muslim League Zindabad," had collected at a road crossing and were found indiscriminately assaulting and breaking heads of the passers-by of the other community."

"Considering the attitude of the hooligans from the fate of Mr. Nauser Ali, it was little wonder that the war of vendetta into which the situation was soon allowed to develop, became sanguinary and horribly cruel. Unprovoked stabbing and looting, rape and ravaging of women, and wholesale slaughter of "enemies of community"—roused to reciprocal frenzy and panic in the case of those to save whom the police had "no instructions to act"—became the order of the day. Some parts of Amherst Street, Jorasanko and Bartola thana areas were the spots of trouble. In the heart of North Calcutta the conflagration spread like lightning. Within an incredibly short time the whole of North Calcutta was the scene of pitched battles, simultaneously fought, in warring zones of small areas confined within limits of practically each and every "mohallah" or "para" with a few notable exceptions. Arson was the favourite method of destruction of "enemy" property by the hooligans who had come to possess unlimited supply of petrol for the purpose."

In the meanwhile the Muslim League Direct Action "rally" was held at the Maidan as arranged. Here the hooligans received every encouragement and nothing was done to stop their vandalism. A gun and rifle shop not far from the place of the meeting was looted by them with impunity. Nightfall found hooligans in possession of the city faced with determined counter-resistance and having the worst of it—at many places.

Second Day—Saturday—17th. August 1946

The murder of a retired additional district judge and the ransacking of his residence in the Park Street Thana area; be murder of an additional district and sessions judge of Alipore, while giving protection to a boy chased by hooligans; shooting a neighbour's wife by firing a gun from his own terrace overlooking the apartment of his neighbour in Jorasanko Thanna area by a fruit-seller; boats sunk in the Hooghly by steam launches and inhuman atrocities perpetrated by the crew on the "manjhis" of the other community, were some of the "highlights" of the carnage committed on this day, despite the complacent assurance of the Chief Minister, given on the previous evening that the situation had "improved" and also despite the curfew imposed from 9 p.m. Over 270 persons were killed and more than 1600 injured on this day.

Section 144 was promulgated in the city and the military took control of the city from the forenoon of Saturday, Oct. 17. The Calcutta Fire Brigade worked full pressure and dealt with about 900 cases of arson, but at many places they were prevented by the mob from even approaching, far less attending, to deal with habitations set on fire.

The idea of forcible enforcement of Pakistan in some parts in the Amherst Thana area, according to a report published in a local daily (Aug. 22)—with the positive programme of uncontrolled orgy of murder, arson, pillage, rape, loot, etc., directed against the other community was entirely the work of outsiders. "It must be said", it continued, "to the credit of the people of the locality that they neither took part in these assaults (which commenced from about 8 a.m. of Friday, August 16) nor assisted these outsider mobs to loot shops in the locality."

"This pledge" it said "was strictly honoured on both sides" and members of both the communities in a certain "bustee" area (under jurisdiction of Amherst Street Police Station) kept on amicable terms with each other throughout the five days of unparalleled stress. But the local "entente" proved to be of no avail. "Mass attacks from outlying localities" took place and "pickets of local people of one community guarded the lane turnings and the footpaths, while youths of the other community kept the rear, ready for action. Fortunately the necessity did not arise, although on several occasions it almost appeared that it had arisen."

But there were several reports which stated that local people who did not readily fall in with the hooliganish project of enforcing Pakistan was compelled to play into the hands of imported hooligans—installed as a sort of area commanders for their victorious army. What happened at Calcutta, therefore, was not the local residents, often established through generations, who were compelled to obey these superimposed "warlords."

The astounding behaviour of the entire police force was deliberately and diabolically calculated to provoke a major conflagration and communal conflict apparently for the fun of getting Hindus and Muslims flying at each others' throats. The hooligans had, therefore, taken it for granted that the police were all on their side. And the police only helped to support the illusion so that hell might properly be let loose. Stolidly indifferent they remained and Mr. Fazlul Huq himself put it in course of his speech at the Bengal Legislative Assembly (preliminary to voting against the no-confidence motion against the Chief Minister and the existing League Government of Bengal on Sept. 20)—"It appeared that British rule had come to an end."

Mob fury was directed also against newspaper offices. "The Statesman" building had some windows and panes of glass broken. The attack on the offices of the "Hindusthan Standard" and "Ananda Bazar Patrika" was of a more serious type. The office staff protected their own lives and the office property as best as possible. The staff mess of Ananda Bazar Patrika Ltd. in Jorasanko Thana area was also badly attacked.

Over 800 persons were removed to different hospitals of the city with injuries, the number of deaths upto 1-30 a.m. (Aug. 17) being given as 161. But there was countless dead and wounded lying in the streets unattended. Troops were moved into the city later in the day and stationed in police headquarters. Curfew was ordered in the city from 9 a.m. to 4 a.m.

A statement of Dr. S. Chakravarty, son of a well-known mathematician, the late Jadav Chandra Chakravarty, (published in a local paper on Aug. 24) related a gruesome incident in the Amherst Street Thana area. Dr. Chakravarty stated that after considerable looting—seemingly with police connivance (construed from their "steady refusal to come to any help") and stabbing and incendiarism which had commenced from Aug. 16, involving destitution of many families, dawn of Saturday (Aug. 17) found "hundreds of hooligans collected on the footpath", threatening him and his family along with the refugees with "loot and death."

A mysterious "helmeted man" was mentioned by Dr. Chakravarty as having played a very prominent part at the time when his house was actually broken into (about 11 a.m.) and "looting began in their presence and everything that could be removed was taken away". "This man", said Dr. Chakravarty, "approached him and told him not to be afraid and he would see that they were escorted safely to safer zones. He introduced himself as a friend of a particular Minister and was an upcountry man in shorts and shirt and speaking both broken Bengali and English."

"After the loot was about to be over," continued the statement, "and when the helmeted man was by his side, they were asked to get down. When the whole crowd of men and women were being driven away, some of the women were assaulted and made naked."

"While the crowd was in the yard", ran the statement, "some of the hooligans forcibly seized some of the women and removed them from the area." Women were also lured away on false assurance of security according to this statement, which said that about '10 to 15 women were forcibly taken away. It was then that the police appeared—"three constables in uniform and to one them the charge of the entire crowd was orally given." In the mid-street however, a "military jeep" appeared and Dr. Chakravarty was "sorry to remark that although they were in such plight some political jokes were cut, but in any case the officers provided them the escort snd they all walked to the thana. The whole gang of hooligans again vanished as soon as the armed military officer held the point of the gun towards them."

Dr· Chakravarty concludes : "Even at the thana, where they were left by the military officers, the treatment received was unexpected aed according to one police officer the looting and stabbing were justified. "The helmeted man was even at the thana and appeared to be friendly even with the police officers. For the last time he stated that if a sum of Rs. 55 was given, he promised to provide them with a lorry for their safe escort to the house of their relatives."

Dr. Chakravarty ultimately managed to procure a lorry, "through the courtesy of some constables" to remove his family to the house of his brother in a safer zone. Certain other members of the family who had concealed themselves in his residence could be removed safely to join the rest of the family in the afternoon (of Saturday, the 17th) when the military took control.

In the area under the Maniktala Police Station also, the police were extremely mischievous in their activities. At a street junction, for instance, the police appeared, according to a statement by a local resident when both sides were facing each other, the one entrenched on the western side of the crossing, the other along areas surrounding the entrance to that locality. The police immediately on arrival, said this statement, straightaway proceeded westward to fall upon the first section and thus affording the other crowd favourable opportunity to further penetrate westward. "At first" said he, "the peaceful citizens appeared flabbergasted. But they soon recovered and effectively resisted the attacking insurgents for about an hour. A police lorry then arrived and stopped at the entrance of the lane. But instead of attempting to disperse the mobs on either side of the road, they created a protective barrier, so to speak, for the "other" mob. The goondas took advantage of this opportunity to cross the road and advance, throwing brickbats and stone chips. "The constables and the sergeant-in- charge did absolutely nothing to check the attack of the hooligans."

Third Day—Sunday—18th. August 1946

The situation in Calcutta showed hardly any improvement on sunday, the third day of the great Carnage. Life in the city showed no sign whatever of returning to normal. With markets closed, supply of milk scarce. shops shut for fear of unchecked hooliganish depradations, the telephone system not working, trains and trams and all other vehicular traffic suspended, the situation remained tense, disquieting and dangerous.

Public leaders were moving for immediate stoppage of the "fratricidal" war and "peace squads" were prominently rushing about appealing for return to sanity. Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose and Sj. Kiran Sankar Roy saw the Governor of Bengal and discussed the situation with him. A conference of leaders was called by the Governor at the Government house and decision was made that "more police and military pickets should be posted." A huge "peace procession " was also taken out through the "Moulali" and "Taltollah"—two of the worst affected areas in Central Calcutta—using the Congress, Muslim League and white flags and making strenuous appeals to the Hindus and Muslims to unite for peace.

Taking advantage of the "lull" in hostilities, many families were moved to less affected areas. But the general situation worsened in the afternoon. The Chief

Minister told the "Associated Press" that the "situation was much the same as it was before" at 9-30 P.M. on Sunday, the 18th August.

With stinking garbage and unwashed remains of deadly carnage the streets of Calcutta took an aspect of a war ravaged city. Rifle fire by the military accounted for a number of gunshot wound cases admitted into the hospitals on that day. The total dead numbered about 400 and the wounded about 2,000. Although the movements of the military and police pickets, according to a pre-arranged plan devised by joint consultation of the civil, the police and the military authorities "to keep main thoroughfares open" had minimised to some extent the danger of "mass attacks", people remained marooned in many area under very dangerous circumstances. The inmates of a Sanskrit College students' hostel were massacred with the exception of a single man who managed to escape.

Residents of a University students' mess would also have shared almost the same fate, but for more energetic action on the part of the Superintendent and authorities responsible for the students there. There was a regular two-day "siege" of these hostels prior to the butchery. Their attention was chiefly confined, however, to lanes and byelanes inaccessible to military vehicles and in areas where the military were discovered not to penetrate. As Mr. Fazlul Huq said in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, "the Control Room (at Police H. Q. Lalbazar) would not control". As a matter of fact the proximity of Police Hq. could not, apparently, prevent the same horrors from being perpetrated in a market nearby.

Fourth Day—Monday—19th Aug 1946

Vigorous and intensive operations of military helped to bring the situation more under control. Panic, however, prevailed everywhere and there was no sign of return of public confidence. For the first time since the "Direct Action" Day (Aug. 16) a few private-owned automobiles were seen moving in the streets of Calcutta The situation remained tense. A Government spokesman gave the total number of the dead at 500 and the injured 3,300. But reports received from hospitals, relief organisations, rescue parties, Ambulance and Red Cross services showed that no fewer than 2,000 persons had lost their lives and the figures for the injured stood well over 8.000 and cases of incendiarism numbered about 2,500 during the four days' "reign of terror." Figures of the Calcutta carnage casualties as given in the House of Commons on Nov. 4, were: 5,018 killed and 13,320 injured. But according to popular estimate, based on closer experience, the numbers have been grossly understated.

Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr. B. C. Koy and Sj. G. D. Birla interviewed the Governor and discussed the situation with His Excellency on Monday morning. Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose also contacted the Viceroy by telephone. Sj. Bose did not agree with the Government of Bengal's appreciation of the situation and wanted that more military pickets should be put to guard the areas such as Entally, Park Circus, Bondel Road, Tollygunge and Kidderpore to prevent mobs from doing more mischief."

"It was heart-rending scene to see people," reported the '*Hindusthan Standard*' in its issue of the 20th. "men, women and children carrying their small-belongings, being removed to safer zones in vans and trucks, belonging either to police or military or non-official organisations. Thousands of marooned people were thus rescued and transported to "safer zones." But even then rescue and rehabilitation could not be properly tackled to restore normal conditions. Looting of shops had by no means stopped. A few markets, including two in Kidderpore area and one in the Park Street Thana were completely looted. Other markets had also suffered badly.

Fifth Day—Tuesday—20th Aug. 1946

However, on the 20th, shops opened in greater numbers and more vehicular conveyances were seen, including buses and taxis. Tramways did not operate. The High Court and its offices, the Civil Courts at Howrah, Alipore and Sealdah and the Presidency Small Causes Court were closd on Tuesday under orders of the Chief Justice of Bengal. The Bengal Legislative Assembly could not function for want of quorum, attendance, only two (European) members having turned up.

Stray stabbing and assault cases had decreased in number and the streets presented evident signs of vigorous cleaning up. At many places, however, although corpses had been removed from streets and open spaces, foul smell and stench was overpowering. Public confidence had not yet returned and the progress to normalcy was slow, but distinct.

A "peace mission" of leaders including Sj. Kiron Sankar Roy, Sj. Surendra Mohan Ghosh, Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani, Sirdar Niranjan Singh Talib, Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed and Mr. Giani Mehra Sing, toured the affected areas of the city flying Congress and League flags. Entally, Park Circus, Kidderpore, Ballygunge Kalighat, Shambazar, Chitpore, Maniktala, were among the places they visited. The Kidderpore area, particularly Metiaburz, were the scenes of the worst type of wanton rapacious cruelty. The 'bustees' were wiped off, the loss of life, here alone, mounting up to 600 according to the lowest figure available. Howrah and Howrah Bridge also witnessed "communal battles" on scale unprecedented.

On Tuesday, August 20th, Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose declared :

"My considerate and deliberate opinion is that the Governor has completely failed in the discharge of his special responsibilities to maintain law and order in the city...I entirely agree that the Governor should be recalled. I also agree that strong military pickets should be posted all over Calcutta and the suburbs under the command of a high military officer who may be expected to hold the scales even."

Bengal Assembly Debate on "Calcutta Killing"

No-Confidence Motion on the Council of Ministers

Calcutta—19th and 20th September 1946

The Bengal Legislative Assembly on the 19th September took up the Congress Party's motions of no-confidence in the Council of Ministers and in Mr. *H. S. Surhawardy*, Minister in charge of Law and Order. Two days had been allotted for the debate.

The Leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly, Mr. *Dhirendra Nath Dutta* moved the first resolution, expressing want of confidence in the Council of Ministers while Mr. *Bimal Coomar Ghosh* moved the second, expressing want of confidence in Mr. H. S. Surhawardy, Minister in charge of Law and Order.

In moving his motion Mr. *Datta* said that by the utterances of League leaders and League Ministers and by declaring Agust 16th as a public holiday for the obervance of the Direct Action Day of the Muslim League, the Council of Ministers led Muslims to believe that they had got power to enforce the observance of the programme by resorting to any violent means, looting, arson and murder, if necessary. With that object in view, a planned arrangement was made to observe the day and a large number of regulation lathis of the same size were imported from outside. Lethal weapons were also imported. So, the point at issue was whether the League Ministry, which was wedded to the policy of breaking the law, could remain as the custodian of the lives and properties of the people. The League could not function both as breaker and preserver of the constitution and law. If it was the privilege of the political party to achieve its objective by breaking the law, then it was equally the privilege of the people to demand that such a party should not and could not remain as the custodian of law.

Giving an account of what happened on August 16th and the subsequent days, Mr. Dutta said that appeal for police help from all quarters of the city produced no results. The police who were responsible for such a carnage unexampled in Indian history were still there, and were busy dircriminating between Hindus and Muslims in making arrests.

Mr. Dutta said that the main issue arising from the motion was not whether the Muslims or the Hindus were aggressive. It was whether the Government had failed in its primary duty of maintaining law and order in the city and protecting the lives and properties of the people. Here it could not but be admitted on all hands that they had failed in their primary duty and the Council of Ministers were responsible for all murders, loot and arson, and should be tried in an open and impartial court.

Referring to Eastern Bengal, Mr. Dutta said that the condition there was such that the Hindus were living in a state of insecurity and their lives had become intolerable. Train Dacoities and robberies attended with murder were common occurrences on the Bengal-Assam Railway between Kishoreganj and Mymensingh districts and Akhaura in Tippera District. Deccan was plague spot in the province.

Asserting that the incidents in the City of Calcutta and the happenings in Eastern Bengal were due to the failure of the police and executive officers to their primary duty of maintaining law and order, Mr. Dutta said that the Council of Ministers could not escape responsibility and they therefore stood condemned.

CHARGE SHEET AGAINST PREMIER

In moving his motion of no-confidence in Mr. H. S. Surhawardy, Mr. *B. C. Ghosh* said that his party (Congress) after anxious consideration of the recent revolting happenings in Calcutta, had arrived at the inescapable conclusion that public confidence could never be fully revived, nor peace, order and tranquility adequately assured, if law and order continued to be the responsibility of a Minister under whose regime the machinery for its administration had either broken down or had been rendered innocuous for four fateful days. The main points in the charge-sheet against the Chief Minister, he said, were that he had failed to arrange for necessary precautionary measures to avert conflicts on August 16, that he had miserably failed in his elementary duty in protecting the life and property of the law-abiding citizen, and that public confidence would not be fully revived if he continued to be in charge of law and order.

It was the experience of everybody, irrespective of creed and community, particularly on August 16 that police assistance and protection to law-abiding citizens was completely denied or refused. The Chief Minister on his own admission had spent long hours in the control room at Police Headquarters but he had said he was merely watching the situation and not interfering in any way with the Police Commissioner's activities. If that was so, he would explain why at all he spent long hours in the control room, and also whether in view of his personal knowledge of the developing situation, he did not consider it his duty to issue instructions to the Commissioner of Police for the maintenance of law and order.

The speaker said that if Mr. Surhawardy continued inh is present office, business and industry in Calcutta which had been affected in the present riots, would not come back to their former pre-eminent position and this would cause untold economic distress to Hindus and Muslims alike. A Minister in charge of law and order who failed in the discharge of his elementary duties to protect the life and property of the common citizen could not continue with impunity in his office but must pay the inevitable penalty.

Opposing the motions, Mr. *Abul Hashim*, Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, expressed surprise that the Opposition should have come out with a motion of no-confidence instead of a motion of confidence in Mr. Suhrawardy. From what he had heard and seen, it was his conviction that what happened in Calcutta did happen, not due to Mr. Suhrawardy or his Ministry, but in spite of them. During those days, Mr. Surhawardy rose to the height of his genius, to the height of his honesty, integrity and sense of justice and efficiency. All the time he was moving in the streets of Calcutta day and night. He saw his comrades and friends falling one by one but he never lost his sense of justice as the Chief Minister of the province. There would be no greater perversion of truth than to say that his allegience to the Muslim League made him unbalanced. It was true that on Augst 16 and 17 the Calcutta Police could not cope with the situation, but who could deny the fact that Mr. Surhawardy at the earliest opportunity called upon the Army to take charge of the city? But the Army did not turn up quickly and under the Government of India Act, the Chief Minister had no control over them.

Giving a background of the Calcutta riots, Mr. Hashim said that Sir Stafford Cripps and his colleagues in the Cabinet Mission had outwitted leaders of both the Congress and the Muslim League. They came to India "to do some politics" and they had succeeded in it. The Calcutta carnage was its beginning. He held the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy's determination to have the Interim Government with the co-operation of the Congress, bypassing the League, responsible for creating the conditions which led to the Calcutta riot. The Congress, at the fag-end of their struggle, thought that they had got what they wanted in the Interim Government. That was why, Mr. Hashim continued, immediately after the Bombay resolution of the Muslim League, Sardar Patel had declared that Muslim "direct action" was not against the British but against the Hindus, that British imperialism was no more, that they were in possession of India, and that they were the head of a sovereign State. By the utterances of Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru an impression had been created in the minds of the Hindus that they had got what they wanted, and the happenings in Calcutta were a direct result of that.

Concluding Mr. Hashim appealed to the Hindus not to be "victims of British machinations", but to realise that time had come when they should rise to the occasion and settle their differences. Public calamities were levellers and he hoped that Hindus and Muslims would make a joint effort in driving away the third party from India.

Second Day—Calcutta—20th September 1946

When the debate was resumed this morning *Mr. Kiron Sankar Roy*, supporting the motions, asserted that the responsibility for last month's terrible calamity must fall on the Chief Minister and his colleagues who had "played a dual role." He said that they with others had organised the demonstration of Direct Action Day, delivered speeches inflaming the ignorant mind, and "roused communal frenzy to the utmost limit." 'On the other side, being at the head of the Government of this province, being responsible for law and order, they sabotaged law and order from the inside."

Discussing the object of the censure motion, Mr. Roy said, "The vote of censure is a political action by which we are seeking to remove this Ministry which we consider to be solely responsible for the terrible tragedy that took place in the city and is even now threatening the entire province of Bengal. No commission of enquiry can do that." The real issue before the House was whether or not there was a breakdown of law and order in the city of Calcutta and elsewhere. It was not necessary to mention incidents of those days to prove that there was a breakdown. "When 5,000 persons are killed and 20,000 injured in a city within the course of four days, no description of incidents and no argument is necessary to prove that there was no law and order in Calcutta for those days."

Mr. Roy continued that preparations for the Direct Action Day had been carried on in such a manner that the police should have known that the celebrations on that day would not be peaceful. "We would like to know if the Criminal Intelligence Department had made any report regarding preparations that were being made for an armed procession." No precautionary measures were taken, the speaker said. "Even after looting and assault began on the morning of August 16, even after a gun-shop in Chowringhee was looted—the police did not make any effective move." All appeals for help from the police had proved useless. It could not be mere inefficiency. "There must be some deep laid conspiracy somewhere. If the Chief Minister was no party to it, then he should throw some light on this mysterious affair."

Mr. Roy then said that the situation had become such that "the canker of communalism has affected the service." He maintained that the "conspiracy" to crush the minority in Bengal had begun much earlier that the Direct Action Day. "One of the worst things that the League Government has done is to introduce communalism into the State machinery. It has totally corrupted the Government machinery and God knows if we would ever have an administration which would deal fairly and honestly with all communities."

Mr. Roy further said that tension had been spreading to other parts of the province. He dwelt on the situation in the different parts of East Bengal, specially Dacca, where "mass attack, looting, arson, stabbing are taking place unchecked by the police." The prospect of Bengal, he concluded, was thus utterly gloomy. "I see no prospect of return of confidence—no establishment of communal harmony, no good and honest government, if this Ministry continues to be in power."

Mr. *M. A. H. Ispahani* (Muslim League) said that it was absurd to suggest that if the Muslims had meant direct action in the literal sense on August 16 they would have selected a city like Calcutta where they were in a minority of three to one in numbers and from the point of view of influence and control of the city, did not count at all. They would have selected better ground to launch it in all its fury. It had been proved beyond doubt that Muslims througout Bengal and India remained peaceful that day. Had it been suspected that trouble was in the offing, different arrangements would have been made. Frankly, the Muslims were taken unawares by the rioting and were completely off guard, with the result that they had to pay heavily in life and property.

Mr. Ispahani congratulated Mr. Suhrawardy on the hard and tireless work he did in the terrible days of the riot, working as many as 18 and 20 hours a day. It was he who brought the conflagration under control in four days. Bombay with all its preparations had not succeeded in doing so for almost three weeks. Ahmedabad was another case in point.

"The power of the Press, particularly the Hindu Press, cannot be ignored, and the part it has played in fanning communal bitterness cannot be exaggerated. More than anything else, it is the Press that is substantially responsible for the unfortunate and regrettable happenings in Calcutta" continued Mr. Ispahani. "Day in and day out it filled its columns with vulgarity and falsehood. Day in and day out truth was converted into falsehood and falsehood into truth. The process has not ceased" Mr. Ispahani said that he was one of those who were constantly on the move from the morning of the 16th until sanity returned to Muslims and Hindus. Brick-throwing from house-tops at Muslim passers-by and processions was employed at every points of vatage with such force that they could not get through or were broken up. The majority of the wounded and dead brought to hospitals in Calcutta before noon on August 16 were Muslims. Most of the shops and houses that were looted and dwelling places that were burnt, particularly till the evening of August 16, belonged to Muslims. While the attack was being carried out with fury, Muslim Leaguers were out calling upon their brothers to remain peaceful, not to retaliate even when provoked. It was only when the bounds of toleration were broken, when reports of large scale murder and massacre spread to the mohallas and wards of Calcutta, that the Muslims began to defend themselves.

It would come as a shock to the House to know that Mr. Kiron Sankar Roy and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose declined to join the Chief Minister in taking peace processions round the city till August 20th, said Mr. Ispahani. Had these processions gone round they would probably have been saved the carnage on the 17th and 18th. Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose's ominous departure for Delhi while Calcutta was in agony was equally significant.

Mr. Ispahani added that he could not absolve the Commissioner of Police from the blame for not having taken necessary precautionary measures from August 16. He would ask the Chief Minister for an explanation as to why and how information of the mass murder, loot and arson that Muslims were subjected to in certain areas did not reach Police Headquaters. When news did come through, nothing could be done because those who were caught were silenced for ever. He would also welcome an explanation from the Chief Minister why the police on the 16th and 17th allowed murder and loot to take place within their sight.

Mr. Ispahani, concluding, said that no one would welcome a Congress-League coalition in Bengal more than he. But similar arrangements should have to be made simultaneously in the other provinces and at the Centre as well.

The Leader of the European Group, Mr. *D. Gladding* said that in view of the impending enquiry by a judical commission, it would be premature "to subject the matter to the arbitrament of a vote in the House". The fact that this enquiry was coming had undoubtedly eased the tension that might otherwise have characterised the debate. On one of the issues which he would call the impersonal issue, namely, whether the administration did all it should have done to check its growth, his party saw *prima facie* reason to doubt whether it did. But because the Commission had been set up, they held that the proper course for everybody was to suspend judgment on this and all their issues until its findings were available. His party proposed to adopt that course.

Mr. Gladding added that what an anxious public did look for in this debate both in Calcutta and throughout the towns and villages of Bengal was an assurance for the future. Peace committees had already been doing their admirable work. To supplement this, the armed police in Calcutta and in the province should immediately be brought far above the inadequate strength at which they stood a month ago. In addition, the Government should give assurances that in future military help would be called in before they could function, and that no blame attached to them if they were not called in early enough.

The Leader of the European Group continued that in the field of politics what public opinion immediately demanded was that the model of the peace committees should be copied in the Government itself by the formation of a Cabinet embracing the Hindu and Muslim parties. "We favoured a coalition when this Ministry was being formed, because we thought that a coalition would be able, better than any other Government, to advance the welfare of the province, to frame and carry out a plan of post-war reconstruction, and to compel the Centre to give the province the fair financial deal that it has not yet seen. To those reasons is now added the certainty that a Coalition Government, better than anything else, would allay the present fears of the people and constitute an insurance against a recurrence of trouble. In terms of Bengal alone, under the shock of the recent calamity there is, I feel sure, sufficient willingness to bring this about.

Mr. Gladding then referred to "two calumnies against my own countrymen that have fallen from the lips of a few previous speakers". It had been suggested that the Cabinet Mission had come out with the deliberate intention of creating a quarrel between Hindus and Muslims". But, Mr. Gladding said, that if one thing had been made clear beyond doubt, it was the *bona fides* of His Majesty's Government and its goodwill towards both communities. The other allegation that the members of his community "chuckled over the horrors of last month" was also far from the truth. "Speaking for myself and for all other members of the Party and for every

European outside the Party whose confidence I enjoy, I deny this charge on my word of honour", he declared.

Speaking amidst considerable interruption, running commentaries, and shouts from League benches and counter shouts from the Opposition benches, Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mookherjee* criticised the entire policy of the Muslim League as the pampered child of British imperialism. (Cries of "question" were heard from League benches) Dr. Mookerjee said that what happened in Calcutta was without parallel in modern history. Tracing its genesis, he said that the old policy of the British Government that there could be no advance without Congress-League agreement was for the first time given the go by in 1946. "The Muslim League was by-passed and the Interim Government was formed. Supposing Mr. Jinnah had been asked to form the Interim Government without the Congress (A voice from the Congress benches: He was very anxious to do so), would those who belonged to the Muslim League have accused the British Government of having betrayed the interests of the Muslims of India? After the Bombay resolution of the League, distinguished Muslim League leaders pointed out that the war had begun and that the days of compromise were over. War meant a war against everyone who did not accept Pakistan. A pattern of civil war, according to Mr. Jinnah, was witnessed in this city. Whether civil war would ultimately help the Muslims to get Pakistan had yet to be seen."

For what happened on August 16 he held the Chief Minister responsible. Practically Mr. Suhrawardy lost his mental balance so much as to delcare in a statement in Delhi that he was going to declare Bengal an independent State. He had further declared that he was going to carry on a no-rent campaign in Bengal. The plan of August 16 was that there would be a blitz attack on the city and the Hindus were to be taken by surprise. But Mr. Surhawardy found that things were going in a different way, and that he had been caught in his own trap. On that day when Mr. Surhawardy knew that trouble was ahead, why did he not immediately promulgate Section 144? Why was the city to be left at the mercy of goondas, murderers, robbers and dacoits? He stood charged with the deliberate offence of having played havoc with the life and property of citizens, Hindus and Muslims in the city.

There was excitement in the House when Mr. *Surhawardy* objected to Dr. Mookherjee's description of certain persons as the goondas, and said that if they were goondas, the person who said so was a goonda.

Dr. *Mookherjee* reported that if he (Dr. Mookherjee) was a goonda, Mr. Surhawardy was the biggest goonda available in Bengal.

There were cries of "withdraw", "withdraw" from both the League and Opposition benches. On the intervention of the Speaker, both withdrew their remarks.

The allegation made by Dr. Mookherjee was that Mr. Surhawardy secured the release of seven Muslims who were found in possession of looted properties and who had been arrested by an European Police Inspector. Mr. Surhawardy replied that they were not found in possession of looted property.

Dr. Mookherjee continued that the trouble was not in Calcutta alone. It was spreading to the whole of Bengal. If those Ministers continued in office, who could say what would happen? At present the Ministry was utilising the Government machinery for preparing the Muslims for launching direct action, which would be of far more serious character. The dual role of Mr. Surhawardy and the Ministry, one as a body in charge of the administration of law and order, and the other as organisers of law-breaking, had to be exposed and ended.

Dr. Mookherjee asked the European group not to sit on the fence. Such an attitude only showed impotence. What Mr. Surhawardy had done was nothing but abject treachery to the great responsibility which he was supposed to have undertaken. It was shameless betrayal.

What they saw in Calcutta, concluded Dr. Mookherjee, was no ordinary riot. Things might become more serious. If a civil war broke out throuhout India would that help the 24 or 25 per cent Muslims in India against 75 per cent non-Muslims? He was not holding out the threat of civil war. But it was a question of realities. They had to come to settlement to save Bengal. There was no doubt that the idea of Pakistan would have to be banished (cries of 'Don't be silly' from League benches). But before that could be done, this must go. They must create a state of affairs which would make it possible to build a future for Bengal which would be good for all irrespective of caste or community.

Opposing the motion of no-confidence, Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq*, ex-Premier, who recently joined the Muslim League, said that he pleaded for peace and tried for peace and if he could not bring about peaceful conditions in the relations of the two communities it was his desire to retire from politics. Commenting on the alleged police inactivity in the riot, Mr. Huq said that although the police were not responsible for the origin of the trouble, they were directly responsible for the great loss of human life and property. Things could not have gone far if the police and the military had taken strong measures. He considered the no-confidence motion inopportune and ill-advised. He felf that they should have awaited the results of the talks that were now going on at Delhi.

Replying to the debate on the no-confidence motions in a 90-minute speech, Mr. *H. S. Surhawardy* asserted that the Muslims were not prepared for a conflict on August 16. They had not the slightest indication that so much antagonism and so much hatred had been stored up against them. They did not realise that the Hindus were determined not only not to observe hartals, but to resist and defy any attempts, indeed any request, to close their shops. Elated perhaps by the observance of the day, hopeful perhaps that the Hindus would observe the hartal along with them as they had done along with the former, they made preparations to have a grand holiday and to come to the maidan and congregate there with lakhs of their brethren. Little did they know that their processions would be stoned, that their shops would be burnt and looted, they would be waylaid, mobbed, stabbed and killed.

Mr. Surhawardy agreed with the proposition that he could not remain in office if he called upon the people to break the law. But, he emphasised, that August 16 was not a day in which direct action was to be launched, nor was it a day, indeed, in which the people were called upon to break the law. It was a simple day for demonstration and for listening to the speeches justifying the policy of the Muslim League. Muslims were not ready for direct action and up till now they did not know what form direct action would take.

Giving what he described as the political background of the Calcutta catastrophe, Mr. Suhrawardy said, "It seems to me that the incidents which have taken place were the bounden results of a chain of circumstances in various fields of life, results indeed the magnitude of which no one could foresees and which was outside the experience of every one. The first and the mot important links in the chain are undoubtedly those factors which produced political tension between the Hindus and the Muslims of an unimaginable and unforeseeable degree. The differing ideologies of Pakistan and Hindustan were being followed by Muslims and by Hindus in their separate camps with unyielding vigour and determination, backed by threats of civil war. But this background would never have seen the light of the day had not the Cabinet Mission betrayed the Muslim League on the one hand, installed the Congress on the other without the Muslim League, and sowed the seeds of dissension between us two and quietly slipped away to watch the results."

It was a thousand pities that the Hindus of Bengal and the Calcutta were determined to see that August 16 should not be a success, under the mistaken belief that if the Muslims made that day a success, Pakistan would be establishad. That day was declared a holiday for the purpose of minimising conflicts. He hoped that if he proclaimed a holiday, the Hindus in their turn would gladly avail themselves of the facility thus offered and would close their shops without being persuaded to do so by Muslims. The Chief Minister here read a translation of a leaflet which he said was widely circulated by the Hindu Mahasabha emphasising that to observe hartal on August 16 would be helping the League and supporting their demand of Pakistan.

The second series of links in the chain which was responsible for the catastrophe was the general spirit of lawlessness in the province. The Government did little either to defend itself or to stem the rising wave of lawlessness, and it was quite clear that a policy of non-interference with political demonstrations was pursued, and civil liberties were made co-terminus with lawlessness. As the police were the target for most of the attacks, the official policy was framed during the Section 93 regime of not allowing police personnel on the streets in troublous times except in parties sufficiently numeurs or adequately armed to defend themselves, and this was the policy which was apparently followed in dealing with the situation of August 16.

Replying to the criticism of attempting to divest himself of responsibility for law and order in Calcutta, of making the Commissioner of Police the scapegoat and of shifting the responsibility upon him, Mr. Suhrawardy wanted to state categorically that he had no such intention. The Commissioner of Police, to his knowledge, put the emergency scheme into operation early in the day on August 16. He utilised the forces at his disposal to the best of his ability, but if he and his police force were overwhelmed, it was not his fault. The police force of Calcutta, Mr. Suhrawardy added, had not been engaged in sufficient numbers to take charge of a general communal conflagration when fighting goes on in every street, lane and by-lane, when human beings committed acts of cruelty and bestiality without any precedence in the annals of Calcutta or of this sub-continent.

The Chief Minister then referred to the allegation that when the police were asked to intervene in the assaults and lootings, they said that they had no orders or they had orders not to interfere. "I can categorically state." he said, "that no such orders were issued. How can I or the Commissioner of Police be held responsible if in some place or places the police at hand do not intervene and do not perform its duty in preserving law and order.,"

Explaining the reasons of his stay in the control room at police headquarters, the Chief Minister said that he was thus able to watch the course of the disturbances and how the reports were dealt with and action was taken on them. He had no doubt that not being entirly dumb, he offered suggestions when he deemed it expedient. The Chief Minister continued that so far as the direction and control of the police force was concerned in Calcutta, the Commissioner of Police was vested with the statutory responsibility, and what he had said elsewhere, that neither he nor a higher power could intervene, was strictly correct. Apart from that, administratively it would be wrong on the part of anyone to interfere with the Commissioner's dispositions without his consent.

Mr. Suhrawardy said that at about 2 p.m. on August 16, he told the Commissioner of Police that the military should be called out. At 2-45 p.m. a warning was communicated to the military authorities to be in readiness as their services might be required. At 4-30 p.m., the decision was taken and communicated to the military authorities requesting them to come to the aid of the civil power, and for this purpose to concentrate a force at Sealdah in order to keep open certain important thoroughfares. In the evening of the day, he insisted that not only should the military be called out but should be placed on the ground. At 11 o'clock, it was decided that the military would patrol the areas already designated. At about noon the next day, the military made preparations to take over certain areas in North Calcutta. These operations ended at 8 p.m. on August 17.

Mr. Suhrawardy said that it had been insinuated that in the Control Room he utilised his position to provide escorts to Muslims only and not to Hindus. This was damnably false and many a Hindu gentleman could give evidence that he treated all alike and when armed guards were available they were assigned to whosoever was present.

Referring to the Opposition assertion that there never would be peace in this province unless a coalition was formed, Mr. Suhrawardy said that his views regarding this matter was known to them. How could there be a coalition in this province with the Congress, when elsewhere there was no co-operation and coalition ? Had not Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel spoken in no uncertain terms that "it is absurd to talk about a coalition between the Congress and the Muslim League: their ideologies are too wide apart."

"Let us all wish ardently," he said, "that the disputes between the Congress and the Muslim League may be settled at the centre in a real spirit of co-operation and friendliness motivated by the earnest desire to see that peace prevails in India. Let us stop talking about civil war as the only other alternative. You cannot have civil war in a country where either the Hindus or Muslims are closely intermingled or one section is in a desperate minority and is perfectly defenceless. That will not be a civil war. That will be insensate brutish butchery and we must avoid it. If you do not want to make a political game of the lives of the people, if you do not think that Hindusthan or Pakistan can be achieved by murdering your neighbour, if you are determined to see that whatever the ideologies, local peace is maintained throughout and an earnest effort is made to preserve peace without having to call in the military."

Concluding, the Chief Minister hoped that this terrible catastrophe which had happened in Calcutta would be a lesson to those who might still think that they were playing with politics, with Ministries, with no-confidence motions, with the battledore and the shuttlecock of power under the shadow of the British Raj. "May it come to pass that those who have died have not died in vain, and on their graves let us build a memorial of abiding peace and co-operation and strive to work for the common welfare of the various peoples that inhabit this sub-continent." he added.

In his survey of events, Mr. Suhrawardy said that he had not hung his head in shame at the manner in which the Muslim League was betrayed by the Cabinet

Mission. As a result of their decision the Muslims were left burning with resentment against the British Government for its signal betrayal. It was true that the Congress had allied itself with the British Government and had accepted an Interim Government including the Muslim League, but the Muslim League though resentful of the Congress attitude, still deemed British imperialism its chief foe for having played fast and lose with the Muslims. The Congress, however, took their position too seriously. They deemed that their entry into the Interim Government had given them unlimited power. If the Muslims raised their heads they would be crushed and crushed easily. The League direct action they considered, as direct action against them and not against the British Power, whose successors they fondly imagined themselves to be. Mr. Suhrawardy believed that Congress feared that if direct action were to succeed, it might induce His Majesty's Government to modify their offer of power to the Congress and they would loss the throne which they had captured. Such was the panic that they considered the shadow of direct action to be direct action itself.

The "no-confidence" motion was lost with 87 voting for and 131 against. The other motion against Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, the Chief Minister, was also defeated, 85 voting for and 130 against.

Neither the strong plea of *The Stateman* made yesterday nor the reasoned appeal made by Congress and Nationalist leaders to-day in the Assembly to cast their votes on the side of law and order succeeded in influencing the European group to take a positive attitude and they announced their decision to remain neutral. It was true that even if the European group of 25 members had voted for the motion, it would not have affected the result of the voting. The two Communist members also remained neutral.

It was not however expected that the four Anglo-Indian members would vote for the Ministry. Of the two Indian Christians, one supported the motion while the other walked into the Ministerial camp. Three Congress Harijan members, who crossed the floor a few days ago, sat in the League benches to-day and voted for the Ministry.

The Rape of Noakhali & Tipperah

The *Hindusthan Standard* wrote :—The "grievous misconception and faulty appreciation of the communal situation which the Governor of Bengal had permitted himself led to the more tragic happenings in Noakhali and Tipperah exactly after seven weeks of the Great Calcutta Carnage. The whole thing betrays secret preparations by evil-doers, aided and abetted, deliberately or unconsciously by overt and covert acts of irresponsible ommission and commission by men in position of responsible authority. The open misuse of the Muslim League's flag by hooligans was the main feature of such preparations. With opinions divided among the leaders, constituting the High Command itself of the Muslim League, as to the non-violent and peaceful manner of their 'modus operandi,' a careful watch on the excitable sections of the public particularly in East Bengal was certainly indicated. But as in Calcutta so also in East Bengal the authorities miserably failed to do their duty in this respect."

As the president of the B.P.C.C. (Sj. Surendra M. Ghosh) had reported : "Civil administration has almost ceased to exist for a particular community in some riot-affected areas in the district of Noakhali." He further proceeded to state that people belonging to the "minority community" who happened to be marooned in the affected areas were living under strict surveillance of local hooligans and in some areas permits were issued for egress from one vilage to another. When any military or civil authority visited the area, "people have to say that they have changed their religion of their own free will. Sometimes people are compelled to live in houses not their own, but sent to their own houses on the approach of any official party. Subscription for a 'particular political organisation' and 'protection tax' are being realised in some areas." Continuing, the report said that "with one or two exceptions, nowhere was the mob confronted by the officers entrusted with the maintenance of Law and Order and no attempt was made to check their progress."

The attack was cruelly planned and thoroughly executed in all details, viz. slaughter of male adults, forcible conversion and re-marriage of women, destruction of property and cattle of the minority community. This is borne out by so many statements, speeches, reports and correspondence (all published in the local papers) that it is not possible to enumerate or reproduce them here.

10th to 15th October 1946

It started with organised hooliganism by "riotous mobs with weapons," affecting a total area covering over 200 square miles of the Sadar and Feni Sub-divisions of Noakhali, beginning from Thursday Oct. 10.

"Enquiries at official sources," a Bengal Press Advisory Committee note said, "reveal that military and armed police have been rushed to the affected areas which comprise the entire Ramgunj, parts of Begumgunj, Raipur, Senbag, Feni, Chagalnaiya and Sandwip Thanas."

A deputation of Calcutta-residing Noakhali people waited upon Mr. Martyn, the Home Secretary, who informed them that a new Magistrate, Mr. McInnernay, I.C.S., had been flown to the district and more police and military had also moved to the localities. A Government of Bengal Press note also admitted receiving "preliminary reports of serious lawlessness" in the district of Noakhali.

From New Delhi, Sj Sarat Chandra Bose, the then Member-in-charge "Works, Mines & Power portfolios in the Interim Government of India telegraphed to the Governor of Bengal intimating outbreak of the outrageous disturbances in Noakhali and also stating that "communication to the Thana H. Q. had been made impossible" and immediate military aid was sought for. Sj. Bose implored the Governor to take "strong action immediately to put down the violence."

The Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, issued a statement detailing the horror and distress of the victims of "this organised gigantic hooliganism," also mentioning *inter alia* that he had a few days ago himself apprised the Governor of Bengal personaly of the "explosive situation" without any "preventive action" being taken thereupon. He also laid stress upon his complaint in the course of this statement, that "an ex-M.L.A. had been openly inciting the people for the last three months to acts of lawlessness and numerous public meetings had been held for this purpose. But in spite of repeated demands from the public, no restraint was put on the activities of these mischief-mongers and they were allowed freely to inflame the passions of the ignorant and fanatical masses."

16th. October 1946

The Bengal Press Advisory Committee released a telegram received from Messrs. Kamini Kumar Dutta, Leader of the Congress Party in the Bengal Legislative Council, and Dhirendra Nath Dutta, Dy. Leader of the Congress Party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly. The telegrams referred urgently to unchecked distress caused by hooligans' atrocities adding: 'The District Magistrate and the Police Superintendent of Noakhali took no steps to prevent the wholesale destruction of properties and lives of innocent villagers," and, "all ingress and egress of the persecuted people to and from the affected areas, covering about 200 sq. miles, are completely stopped and all approaches to these areas are being closely guarded by hooligans, armed with deadly weapons."

The telegram also referred to "the planned organisation behind this terrible carnage, arson and loot" and urging "immediate posting of military in Noakhali, Tipperah and Chittagong." It stated: "Troubles have spread over other thanas of Noakhali and portions of Hajigang, Faridganj and Laksham Thanas of Tipperah District have also been affected."

"Serious lawlessness in Ramgunj, Begumgunj and Lakshmipur in Noakhali, and in the Hajigunj Police Station area in Tipperah" was also admitted in a Bengal Government Press note which stated that "strong action" was being taken, that Sec. 144 had been promulged in Feni and that "additional armed police are being sent to East Bengal for use in Noakhali and Tipperah."

Admitting "very serious operation" in Noakhali, the Chief Minister at a Press Conference in Calcutta said that it had become somewhat "difficult for the troops to move in the affected area as canals had been dammed, bridges damaged and roads blocked." Apart from rushing "more battalions," if needed, to the affected areas, he said, he contemplated dropping "printed appeal and warning from the air" to the people to stop these things.

The Chief Minister also stated that the situation in Noakhali was extremely bad and that there had been forcible conversion, plunder and loot, "but these things had to be stopped." But he had "no idea," he said, "why these things had taken place."

"At least over 5000 persons have been killed in the lawlessness in certain areas in Noakhali and Tipperah Districts since Oct. 10," stated the President, B.P.C.C., adding: "Over 50,000 others have been affected by other acts of the rioters, namely, forcible conversion, forcible marriages and abductions." An idea of the extent of rape and abduction committed in the affected areas can be had from the following report published in the *Hindusthan Standard* of Nov. 5, from its Comilla correspondent:

"Mr. Simpson, I.C.S. who was deputed by the Bengal Government to prepare a statistical record of losses and atrocities perpetrated in Chandpur Subdivision has, it is understood, completed his work.

"It transpires from authoritative sources that in one area more than 300 cases of rape and in another area about 400 cases of rape on defenceless women were reccorded. A Deputy Magistrate deputed by the District Magistrate, recorded statements of about 40 women of ages ranging from 12 to 60, who narrated painful stories of brutal outrage on their modesty."

18th. October 1946

Issued in the evening of the previous day (Oct 17), a Government of India Press note declared: "The disturbances have tended to move northwards away from the northern parts of Noakhali to the south western parts of the Tipperah district to Hajigunj, Chandpur and Laksham."

But at a Press Conference in Calcutta on Oct. 16, the Chief Minister had said that the "tendency for it to spread has been definitely stopped"!—"Once more," commented 'The Statesman' (Calcutta) editorially, "the administrative system in Bengal shows up in the ugly light of inefficiency." Continuing, it went on to say: "It seems odd that despite evidence of administrative breakdown in a part of the province, for weeks notoriously menaced by just this sort of catastrophe there should have been no movement of the Governor or Chief Minister to the point of catastrophe. The one remains at Darjeeling, the other has gone to join him there."

The total number of refugees were reported (unofficially) to have reached up to about 12000 at Chandpur and Comilla, 3000 at Ramgunj and at least 1000 at Calcutta.

19th. October 1946

Acharya Kripalini, Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose and Surendra Mohan Ghosh flew from Calcutta to the areas affected by the disturbances in Noakhali. Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani, Maj-Gen. A. C. Chatterjee and Kumar Devendra Lal Khan M.L.A. (Central) also accompanied them.

A telegram, received from Chaumuhani and dated Oct. 17, to the President B.P.C.C stated that murder, looting, arson and conversion were still continuing in the area. It added: "Unconverted people are being slaughtered on mass scale. No help is available from the local authorities for rescue and protection. Full Military administration is required. People are starving for want of ration. Immediate action is solicited."

At New Delhi on the previous (Oct 18) evening, Mahatma Gandhi who had been contacted personally by Dr. B. C. Roy on the morning of the same day and apprised of the situation in Noakhali, referred to the atrocities being perpetrated in Noakhali and the plight of the women there, in his usual after-prayer address, stating: "If one half of India's mankind was paralysed, India could never really feel free. I would far rather see India's women trained to wield arms than that they should feel helpless." Honour, he said, knew no surrender to any power on earth. "Self-immolation by talking poison" was a better way out, he suggested, than surrender to dishonour.

And, as a matter of fact, it was soon revealed that this was exactly what the women had been forced to do. "The history of the heroic Rajput ladies was repeated in Noakhall," wrote the "Hindusthan standard," "when a large number of women in order to save their honour jumped into fire and many took poison and some committed suicide by hanging."

20th. October 1946

"The Governor of Bengal accompanied by his Chief Minister and the Inspector-General of Police, Bengal, visited Feni by plane and flew over the affected areas of the districts of Tipperah and Noakhali yesterday" (Oct. 18), declared a Government of Bengal Press note.

"According to the refugees," wrote a correspondent from Comilla in the course of a despatch released for publication on Oct. 19 evening by the Bengal Press Advisory Committee, "not a single arrest was made during all the 5 days of lawlessness in Noakhali, nor was a single shot fired except in one case. The military and armed police since posted are extremely inadequate." The despatch also said: "The hooligans are now reported to be adopting new tactics. They go to one or two houses in a village, ask people to change their religion and slaughter their cattle and set fire to their houses. These are generally followed by wholesale evacuation of villagers in panic."

21st. October 1946

In London, on the same day, the Under-Secretary for India (Mr. Arthur Henderson) read in the House of Commons a report from the Governor of Bengal wherein His Excellency Sir Frederick Burrows had stated that "the number of dead from the rioting (in East Bengal) were expected to be low in the three-figure category."

The President-elect of the Indian National Congress (Acharya Kripalani) in company with Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose returned to Calcutta on Sunday (Oct. 20) and revealed his first impressions of the tour. "It was impossible for us to ascertain the exact number of casualties, but we have no doubt whatever that the figure mentioned by the authorities are an under-estimate," he said.

"Neither the public nor the authorities have any means to estimate these figures at present," he continued. "The area of disturbance seems to be closed not only to the public but to the authorities also."

The Editor of the 'Ananda Bazar Patrika', who had accompanied the Congress President-elect's party also returned with them in the same plane.

A Wardhagunj message, dated Oct. 19, received by the "Hindustan Standard" from its own correspondent, was published, announcing Mahatma Gandhi's decision to visit East Bengal.

Caused by a body of hooligans (it was "no general rising" of the majority community against the minority community) who have exploited the existing communal feeling and who, as they range the countryside, are temporarily joined in each locality by "belligerent roughs" (in the words of the Under-Secretary of State for India, Mr. Arthur Henderson, speaking at the House of Commons on Oct. 11,) the "disturbances" continued; and the authorities responsible for law and order and the Government in the province plaintively declared that "restoration of order is hampered by bad communications which make it difficult to establish contact with the main body of rioters." In course of the same statement, Mr. Henderson asked the (Conservative) Opposition to appreciate that law and order is a provincial subject and, therefore, the responsibility was primarily of the Bengal ministry and the legislature.

Commenting on the amazing report of the Government of Bengal as read out to the House of Commons, Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose challenged the " low in the three figure" statement about Noakhali casualties of the minority community arising out of the open and unprovoked war of extermination launched against them by the majority community. "At one place, namely the Cutchery and residence of Sj. Surendra Kumar Bose, 400 persons are reported in the Press to have been murdered in one day. A large number of persons, including Rai Saheb Rajendra Lal Roy, President of Noakhali Bar, were murdered at Sj. Roy's house on the third day of the disturbances. "No police help." continued Sj. Bose, "was given to the persons and families attacked, although timely appeals for help were made. The disturbances were caused by organised bands consisting of ex-military men. Information was sent in writing to the local Magistrate and the police of the preparations that were being made by persons mentioned above, but no action was taken."

"On the Azad Hind Government declaration day," said Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose in course of another Press statement, 'I solemnly appealed to the fighting elements and revolutionary forces in India to consolidate and organise themselves immediately to resist this mad orgy of internecine violence and to defeat it."

"From what I have seen and heard the day before and yesterday," said the President-elect of the Indian National Congress (Acharya Kripalani) on Oct. 21, "I am clearly of opinion that whatever the Government, Provincial or Central, may or may not do, every Bengalee, male or female, has to defend himself or herself by whatever means he or she can think."

He also instanced the example of "Shri Rajendra Lal Roy and his family who defied a mob for two full days and fell fighting."

On October 24th, a Bengal Government Press note boasted of "active operations to round up the hooligans." But on Nov. 13, the following message came from Chaumuhani:

"Two persons who were returning home after attending Mahatma Gandhi's evening prayer on Sunday (Nov. 19) are reported to have been murdered on the way about six miles from Duttapara (Mahatmaji's camp) by one of the alleged notorious miscreants. Police and military searches are going on, but the alleged assailant has not been found."

A request for "effective remedial measures" to the Home Department of the Interim Central Government was made by Sj. Kamini Kumar Dutta, Leader of the Congress Party, Bengal Legislative Council, after giving "a broad outline of the devastation and lawlessness in Noakhali." In the course of a statement Sj. Dutta said: "No one from ouside can enter the affected areas without peril of of life and that area has been cut off from civilised world." Sj. Dutta also stated that after a personal visit of enquiry undertaken on the 13th, he met the Minister of Civil Supplies on the 15th as the latter was on his way to Noakhali. He had also interviewed the Superintendent of Police before. "The authorities," continued Sj. Dutta, "are very anxious to shroud the whole affair from public inspection, lest their criminal inefficiency will then be fully established. No force was sent to the affected area till October 14th. There was the mockery of some police officers visiting the area before 14th, but by their inactivity they encouraged depredation."

The Executive Council of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee adopted resolutions at its meeting held on Tuesday, October 22, stating 'inter alia' that: "Widespread and organised lawlessness in many parts of the Province, particularly in Calcutta, Noakhali, Tipperah, Dacca and other districts of East Bengal" were noted by it with deep concern; "all Congress Committees and all Congress workers" were enjoined to organise such defence "as were feasible and practicable under the present circumstances" so that the people might not yield to panic and terror; Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose was empowered to form a Central Committee and do the needful for relief, rehabilitation and protection of the people affected or who may be affected by the communal disturbances. Condemning "the Government dominated by the communal Muslim League Ministry," and for the Government's failure to check murder, loot, arson, forcible conversion and vile offences against women that had become 'matters of daily occurrence,' the Executive Council called upon "all law-abiding citizens to organise themselves for self-defence, instead of depending on the Governmental machinery which has failed to discharge its primary obligations of maintaining law and order."

A representative of the Bengal Press Advisory Committee, reporting after a tour of the riot-affected areas in Noakhali said: "It is a misnomer to characterise these happenings merely as 'lawlessness' or 'communal disturbances.' They are nothing short of a total war upon the minority community waged in the name of a political organisation with the Ministry under its control and with the officialdom either in collusion or as a conniving party."

"The principal motive behind these acts," wrote "The Statesman" of Calcutta, was "looting and conversion of people to a new faith."

"This outburst of hostilities is the direct result of the politics of hate and strife that the Muslim League has practised for the past months and of the threats of violence that it has held out in the past months," declared the Congress Working Committee's resolution on the Bengal situation adopted on Oct. 24. "Further," added the resolution, "the Governor and the Governor-General who claim to possess special responsibilities in such matters must also share the burden for events in Bengal."

Hence by the third week from the commencement of the East Bengal "disturbances" in Feni on Oct. 8, the country had no room for doubt that the socalled "minority" community of Bengal were being barbarously victimised by joint negligence of the representatives of the British Crown and the established Muslim League Government of Bengal. A direct outcome of this mad marauding to Pakistanise Noakhali has been the following, a mere instance out of innumerable such tragedies:

"I remember the woeful scream of my daughter when she was snatched away from my bosom," said an agonised mother to Gandhiji at Noakhali, whose daughter had been carried away by an educated youngman of the majority community. "You can easily realise, Mahatma as you are, the agony of a mother's heart. I will not let you go away from this part of the province until I get back my beloved daughter."

Further study of the situation must be proceeded with from this focus in perspective.

At a mass meeting at New Delhi on Oct. 25, held under the presidentship of the Managing Director, "Ananda Bazar Patrika" and "Hindusthan Standard" (Sj. Suresh Chandra Majumdar), "immediate recall of the Bengal Governor, dismissal of the Suhrawardy Ministry and intervention of the Centre with a view to stopping the present lawlessness in Bengal" was demanded in a resolution.

Meanwhile things were by no means quiet in East Bengal despite the actions of the police and the military. The total areas affected now exceeded over 500 square miles. Reports of hooligans hampering relief work were received from unexpected places, for instance, Comilla. "It is impossible to estimate," declared Lt.-Gen F. R. R. Bucher, G. O. C., Eastern Command, addressing a Press Conference on Oct. 26, in Calcutta, on the situation in Noakhali and Tipperah Districts, "how long it will take to restore confidence in the disturbed areas." But he appeared confident that with a strength of 1,500 military forces in the disturbed areas, confidence would be restored "in 10 or 14 days."

In the course of a speech broadcast from Delhi, the Viceroy also had said 'inter alia' on Oct, 28, "I want to impress on you that with the formation of a Coalition Government, India has taken another great stride forward on the road to freedom. Let us not look backward to old hatreds and injuries and recriminations, but forward to the prospect of a free, powerful and prosperous India."

In plain and simple language, His Excellency was inviting the country to accept the "fait accompli" of Pakistan which had been obtained by the Muslim League's well-demonstrated "Direct Action" and thus accept the "status quo."

No wonder that the Viceregal announcement encouraged the Bengal Government to fresh demonstration of their "primary responsibility,' in the matter to withdraw "the exemption granted to the publication of matter communicated to the Press by the Press Advisory Committee, Bengal." The full mischief of this order was illumined by the receipt, on November 4 at Calcutta, of a telegram by the President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, from Mr. Ananda Mohon Poddar, M.L.A. (Central), and Chairman, Naraingunj Municipality, stating that incidents had happened in several moffusil areas in the sub-division and in the town itself.

At the House of Commons, on the same day (Nov: 4), Mr. Arthur Henderson admitted that Mymensingh had also been affected by communal rioting, although the "general situation in East Bengal was under control" and 'hooligan bands" did not appear to be 'operating'.

We shall conclude with two quotations from two distinguished people, Miss Muriel Lester and Dr. Amiya Chakravarty who had gathered first-hand information for themselves before making their statements.

On Nov. 6, Dr. Chakravarty interviewed Mahatma Gandhi, prior to the Mahatma's departure for Noakhali, at Sodepore (where Mahatmaji was held up so long because the Government could not make proper arrangements for his transport to Noakhali). "The most urgent and imperative need now," said Dr Chakravarty, "is to rescue the numberless abducted women who are entombed in 'burkha' and who, for obvious reasons, could not be approached by the military." It was a very trying time for Mahatmaji. Reports from Bengal and Bihar had driven him to the despair of threatening a "fast unto death" but he consented to put it off and place himself 'on reduced diet" during his sojourn of the affected areas.

Writing from a relief centre in an East Bengal village, Miss Muriel Lester stated :

"......worst of all was the plight of the women. Several of them had to watch their husbands being murdered and then be forcibly converted and married to some of those responsible for their death, Those women had a dead look. It was not despair, nothing so active as that. It was blackness.. The eating of beef and declaration of allegiance to Islam has been forced upon many thousands as the price of their lives...Perhaps the only thing that can be quite positively asserted," she continues, "about this orgy of arson and violence is that it is not a spontaneous rising of the villagers. However many goondas may live in Bengal, they are incapable of organising this campaign on their own initiative. Houses have been sprayed with petrol and burnt. Who supplied this rationed fuel? Who imported stirrup pumps into this area? Who supplied the weapons?..

"The goondas seem to think that they really are the rulers of this beautiful area of Bengal. One sees no sign of fear among those who had stood by and watched destruction, tyranny and aggression, or anxiety as to future punishment does not seem to exist."

The Bihar Riot

Origin of the Trouble

The communal carnage in the Bihar province, which was reported to have started in Chapra town on the 24th October 1946 affected fairly wide areas in Chapra, Patna and Bhagalpur districts.

The atmosphere, however, was tense in some districts and in Patna city, and there was danger of the marauders shifting the scene of their depredations to other areas, particularly in the border region of Gaya district.

The happenings in East Bengal and propaganda by certain elements were stated to have created a frenzy, ultimately culminating in the outbreak of lawlessness.

Estimates of the gravity of conditions and the number of casualties varied widely and it was difficult to arrive at correct figures. Some 50 villages in Patna district and about the same number in the two districts of Chapra and Bhagalpur were affected. Other parts were free of violence.

Authoritative quarters believed that the number killed was about 400 but other reports put it much higher, sometimes counting in thousands. Over 400 houses in Patna district alone had been burnt. The number of refugees in Patna exceeded 4,000 and the problem had become acute. Elsewhere, their number was limited. There was one Government relief camp, where food, clothing and shelter were provided for the refugees. Muslim League circles said that there were about 14,000 refugees in the city, living in 20 relief camps run by them. Orders under Sec 144 CrPC were promulgated in the affected villages on Oct 28 and in the disturbed towns on Oct 29, in Patna and other affected towns, curfew between 6 p.m. and 5 a.m. was imposed on Oct 29, the military was called out in aid of the civil authorities on Nov 1. The police and the military were reported to have fired on some occasions, but not many casualties as a result of this had been reported. No supply difficulties had been experienced. One railway station was burnt, resulting in some dislocation in the running of trains.

PEACE APPEALS

In some affected areas, Congress and League leaders had been co-operating in combating lawlessness and issuing appeals for peace.

Mr. *Anugraha Narain Singh*, Finance Minister, who had been touring some of the disturbed areas, in an interview, said that the death figures might be between 300 and 400 although panic has been responsible for putting the number much higher in some circles. He said: "Many instances have come to notice when victims of one community have been given shelter by members of the other community and have enabled them to evacuate to safe places at the earliest moment. It is correct that many houses have been burnt, but not before the inmates had left them. Mobs from outside were responsible. We cannot give any exact reason for this frenzy, but it appears that East Bengal incidents had deep repercussions on the population here. To certain extent, agent provacateurs have also been carrying on nefarious propaganda. Wa have not been able to spot them. As soon as we spot them, we will deal with them very severely.

"Military and police have been posted at all strategic centres. Police protection has been extended to evacuees. Patna, Chapra and Bhagalpur towns have been affected, but are now reported quiet.

"In Chapra, portions of the Sadar sub-division have been affected, but latest reports say that the district is quiet. No incidents have been reported during the last two days.

"Bhagalpur town is now calm, but disturbances are likely to extend to the rural areas.

"We did not realize at the beginning that the riots would spread as they did. They were, however, local and spontaneous, and certainly not organized. Whatever force we had at our disposal, we immediately sent to places from where reports of disturbances came. When that appeared inadequate, the Military was called in aid of the civil authorities on Nov 1. The Military are very helpful and we expect more energetic co-operation from them after the visit of the Viceroy and the Central Government Members.

"All officers concerned are rendering splendid service. We are hopeful that in three or four days we will be able to bring the entire situation under control.

"Government are giving relief to whoever come as refugees and choose to live in Government camps. As yet, no difficulty regarding supply of essential commodities have been felt as a result of the riots."

Nehru's Visit to Affected Areas

Pandit Nehru and Mr. *Abdul Rab Nishtar* accompanied by Mr. *Anugraha Narain Singha*, Finance Minister and Mr. *Abdul Bari*, President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee and Mr. *Nauman* and other Muslim League leaders visited Jethli. Fatwa, Bakhtiarpur and Biharsharif.

At Jethli, Pandit Nehru saw the arson committed by hooligans and at Fatwa addressed a large gathering and appealed for peace, amity and concord between the Hindus and Muslims in Bihar. He warned the people that the Government would not tolerate jungle law and most drastic steps would be taken by the Government to stop destruction of human life and property.

At Biharsharif, in spite of the tense communal atmosphere and against the advice of local officials, Pandit Nehru addressed another meeting and explained his mission to the people and requested them to live in peace at all costs.

Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar also addressed the gathering and appealed to the Muslims to maintain peace.

On his return journey, Pandit Nehru addressed a meeting at Jethli village where there was trouble the previous day and after addressing a meeting in Patna city he and Sardar Nishtar boarded a special train to Jehanabad.

"If you want to kill a Muslim you must kill me first and proceed to do whatever you choose after marching over my dead body," said Pandit Nehru addressing a public meeting at Taregna, one of the worst affected areas where the railway station had been burnt and a number of people killed.

Addressing meetings at Poonpoon, Nadaul and Jahanabad, Pandit Nehru made it plain that the Government would take the most stringent measure to quell the disturbances. If the rioters did not repent for their acts and behave properly, the Government would not show any mercy towards them and they would be fired upon and bombed from air if necessary.

At all these meetings, Pandit Nehru severely chastised the people for resorting to acts of lawlessness and told them they were seriously mistaken if they had thought that Swaraj meant the freedom to cut the throats of the people with whom they disagreed. He made pointed reference to the majority community in the Province and said that the shouts of Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru-ki-jai did not sound pleasing to his ears when he knew that they had indulged in acts of violence instead of sacrificing their lives to protect their Muslim brethern. By these acts they had proved traitors to their country and placed serious obstacles on the path of Swaraj.

Pandit Nehru repeatedly asked his audience at every meeting to give him the assurance that they would give adequate protection to the Muslims even at the cost of sacrificing their all instead of thinking and acting in terms of retaliation for the happenings in East Bengal.

Everywhere the crowds which had assembled to hear Pandit Nehru took his rebukes silently and at several places shouted the slogan "Hindu-Muslim Ek Ho" at the end of his speech.

At two stations Muslims represented to Pandit Nehru that they might be evacuted from certain places which had become unsafe for them and urged that officials should take immediate steps for the safety of the persons concerned.

"THIS MADNESS MUST END"

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru issued the following statement from Patna on the 5th November :

"Soon after my arrival here on third evening, I sent a telegram to Mahatma Gandhi in reply to an enquiry of his. This enquiry related to a specific instance and I find considerable prominence has been given in the local Press to my reply and it has been taken to apply to the whole Bihar situation. I want to make it clear that this was not my intention and I would not speak of the whole situation on arrival here without fuller knowledge.

"While exaggeration is undoubtedly bad and must be avoided, to under-rate what has happened or is happening is also bad and dangerous.

"What has happened and is happening in certain parts of Bihar is terrible, and I can hardly believe that human beings can behave so.

"We have to put an end to this madness immediately and then we can argue about it later. Any person who minimises the gravity of the situation here does no service."

Official Review of the Situation

The Director of Publicity, Bihar issued the following communique on the communal situation in Bihar from Patna on the 4th November :—

Reports received at the headquaters go to show that the presence of troops and vigorous peace efforts are having a reassuring effect, although tension is still acute over a large part of the Province.

No incidents have occurred in Patna during the last 24 hours except that there was a sudden panic in the Bankipore area last night. Reports of arson at a place 11 miles east of Patna City were received yesterday. Troops opened fire as a result of which four persons were killed. No incidents are reported from the Hilsa and Islampur areas. Serious trouble is reported to have broken out near Ekangarsari in the Patna district, where a number of persons are said to have been killed including some policemen. Casualties appeared to be heavy but details are lacking.

Troops have taken up positions in the Makdumpur area of Gaya district from where trouble was reported. Gaya town is quiet. Military patrols are active.

The situation is reported to be tense in the Jahanabad area. Five dead bodies were recovered in Nawabganj.

Chapra town was quiet, but the situation in the mofussil area is still not free from anxiety and strict vigil is being maintained.

Monghyr town is quiet, but serious trouble is reported from the Tarapur police station. Thirty dead bodies have been recovered,

Rioting occurred in Rajoon area in Bhagalpur district. Some casualties have been reported but authoritative figures are not yet available. The areas of Santal Parganas, bordering on Bhagalpur district, are showing sign of tension and trouble is reported from the Bohagama area. Four cases of death have occurred.

Parties of Hindu and Muslim workers are moving from place to place appealing to the people to maintain peace and it is producing good results.

Mahatma Gandhi to Fast Unto Death

"Mahatma Gandhi has decided to undertake a fast unto death unless this fratricidal war in Bihar stops within 24 hours. If the worst happens, Mahatma Gandhi may come to Bihar and start the fast here."

This was announced by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Food Member, at a Press Conference at Patna on the 5th November, convened by the Prime Minister of Bihar, Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha.

Acharya Kripalani, President-elect of the Congress, who also attended the conference and Dr. Rajendra Prasad arrived by air from Delhi in the afternoon.

Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha declared that the Government had in mind the promulgation of an ordinance shortly to control publication of news relating to riots and comments on them.

On account of Mahatmaji's decision, he made a special request to Press to exercise the utmost restraint. He appealed to the Press to help the Government in restoring order by refraining from publication of unauthorized reports about communal disturbances and comments likely to inflame communal passion.

Gandhiji's Call to Bihar

An appeal to Biharis not to degrade themselves and drag down India was made in a letter "to Bihar" addressed on the 6th November by Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji said that predominantly for reasons of health he had put himself "on the lowest diet possible soon after my reaching Calcutta. That diet now continues as a penance after the knowledge of the Bihar tragedy. The low diet will become a fast unto death if the erring Biharis have not turned over a new leaf." The following is the text of Gandhiji's letter :—

"To Bihar—Bihar of my dreams seems to have falsified them. I am not relying upon reports that might be prejudiced or exaggerated. The continued presence of the Central Chief Minister and his colleague furnishes an eloquent tale of the tragedy of Bihar. It is easy enough to report that things under the Muslim League Government in Bengal were no better and far worse and that Bihar was mearly a result of the latter. A bad act of one party is no justification for the similar act by the opposite party, more especially when it is righty proud of its longest and largest political record. I must confess, too, that although I have been in Calcutta for over a week, I do not yet know the magnitude of the Bengal tragedy. Though Bihar calls me, I must not interrupt my programme for Noakhali. And is counter-communalism any answer to the communalism of which Congressmen have accused the Muslim League? Is it nationalism to seek barbarously to crush the 14 per cent of the Muslims in Bihar?

Duty Towards Minority Muslims

"I do not need to be told that I must not condemn the whole of Bihar for the sake of the sins of a few thousand Biharis: Does not Bihar take credit for one Brijkishore Prasad or one Rajendra Prasad? I am afraid, if the misconduct in Bihar continues, all the Hindus of India will be condemned by the world. That is its way and it is not a bad way either. The misdeeds of Bihari Hindus may justify Qaid-e-Azam Jinnh's taunt that the Congress is a Hindu organisation in spite of its boast that it has in its ranks a few Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. Bihari Hindus are in honour bound to regard the minority Muslims as their brethren requiring protection equal with the vast majority of Hindus. Let not Bihar which has done so much to raise the prestige of the Congress be the first to dig its grave.

"I am in no way ashamed of my Ahimsa. I have come to Bengal to see how far in the nick of time my Ahimsa is able to express itself in me. But I do not want in this letter to talk of Ahimsa to you. I do want, however, to tell that what you are reported to have done will never count an Act of bravery. For thousands to do to death a few hundreds is no bravery, it is worse than cowardice. It is unworthy of nationalism or any religion. If you had given a blow against a blow, no one would have dared to point a finger against you. What you have done is to degrade yourselves and drag down India.

"You should say to Pandit Jawharlalji, Nistar Saheb and Dr. Rajendra Prasad to take away their military and themselves and attend to the affairs of India. This they can only do, if you repent of your inhumanity and assure them that Muslims are as much your care as your own brothers and sisters. You should not rest till every Muslim refugee has come back to his home which you should undertake to rebuild and ask your Ministers to help you to do so. You do not knew what critics have said to me about your Ministers.

"Biharis must Turn Over New Leaf"

"I regard myself as a part of you. Your affection has compelled that loyalty in me. And since I claim to have better appreciation than you seem to have shown of what **Bihari** Hindus should do, I cannot rest till I have done some measure of penance. Predominantly, for reasons of health, I had put myself on the lowest diet possible soon after my reaching Calcutta. That diet now continues as a penance after the knowledge of the Bihar tragedy. The low diet will become a fast unto death if the erring Biharis have not turned over a new leaf. There is no danger of Bihar mistaking my act for anything other than pure penance as a matter of sacred duty.

"No friend should run to me for assistance or to show sympathy. I am surrounded by loving friends. It would be wholly wrong and irrelevant for any person to copy me. No sympathetic fast or semi-fast is called for. Such action can only do harm. What my penance should do is to quicken the conscience of those who know me and believe in my *bona fides*. Let no one be anxious for me. I am like all of us in God's keeping. Nothing will happen to me so long as He wants service through the present tabernable.

Pt. Nehru's Spirited Appeal

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, addressing a large meeting held at the Bankipur Maidan on the 6th November, said: "It is a matter of shame for me to come down here and ask you to observe the basic principles of civilised conduct when so many problems, national and international, are facing us and need solution. Things which even a child understands have to be repeated to you at this stage that you should not kill your neighbour or set houses on fire or loot property which does not belong to you.

Pandit Nehru added: "By no standards of civilised conduct can acts of lawlessness and killing of neighbours be justified. There can be no justification for stooping to bestiality, simply because some of your fellowmen have lost their heads elsewhere. I have heard students and other "ism"-Wallahs shouting slogans, but what is happening in this province is pure and simple hooliganism and it is your first and foremost duty to stop it at once and at all costs. You cannot shift the responsibility by simply saying that you did not take part in it individually."

What happened in Noakhali was certainly bad enough, Pandit Nehru said, but surely that could not wash away the sins committed in Bihar. He failed to understand how the simple-minded kisans of Bihar were maddened in this way to behave like beasts. He had heard shouts of "Delhi Chalo" from them. But their actions had made Delhi distant for him for the time being, as he could not go back to Delhi leaving things as they were after what he had seen and heard in Bihar.

Referring to the atmosphere of suspicion prevailing in the province, Pandit Nehru said that people had met him in the villages and even in the town of Patna itself expressing their fear of their neighbours. He regretted that the fear of the ruling race which has been dispelled by the untiring efforts of Mahatma Gandhi should now be supplanted by the fear of their own countrymen. For the good of the country, if not for anything else, this fear must have to be dispelled for good. "No country can progress if its people are fearful of each other", he added. Pandit Nehru advised to people to shed all fear and to discontinue shouting of slogans which created panic for the time being. "Discountenance rumours, organise defence committees if you like, but be courageous," he said

Pandit Nehru regretted that the people by their actions had forced the hands of the Government to resort to force and summon military aid to control the situation. No Government either of Hindus or Muslims could tolerate lawlessness and was bound to take repressive measures and use force for restoring peace. When the Government had to follow such a course by firing machine-gunning and bombing people, both the innocent and the guilty had to suffer. Such a course surely could not be desirable for the people, but would be inevitable if acts of lawlessness continued. He assured the people that the situation would be controlled within two or three days by the Government, but still it was the imperative duty of the people to see that the disturbances were stopped as a result of their own efforts.

Dr. Rajendra Prosad's Call

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing the gathering, said, "Pandit Nehru, Acharya Kripalani and myself have been forced to hurry here for a reason which I consider shameful for the province. The fame of the province has been besmirched. What has happened already is disgaceful and should not be allowed to continue any more and must be stopped at all costs. I do not want to say that what happened in East Bengal or elsewhere can be supported. But the people of Bihar cannot have the face now to say that their brethren had been wronged in Bengal, because they themselves have disgraced the Province by retaliating.

"You must not forget that the way in which you have reacted to happenings in Bengal can have similar effects elsewhere. If the Hindus think that they can suppress Muslims and live in peace, they are sadly mistaken. Many of them are themselves now not having sleep due to worries and anxieties as a result of the conditions they have brought about at several places for fear of their lives.

"Humanity demands that this mad orgy of loot, arson and murder must be stopped immediately even at the cost of great sacrifice, if necessary. We are making out utmost endeavour to restore peace. The Government is also striving towards that end. But such efforts cannot succeed if the people do not offer their all-out co-operation. The Government is fully prepared now to stop the disturbances, but it would be a matter of shame if it had to have resort to force. Even now I would appeal to you to stop this violence on your neighbours by your own efforts".

Dr. Prasad also reminded the people to consider the effects these disturbances were having on their accredited leaders, especially Mahatma Gandhi. The effect had been terrible on Mahatma Gandhi as a result of which he had decided rather to efface himself from the earth than to see this orgy continue. "Do not blacken the name of Bihar further", said Dr. Prasad, "by being responsible for the cause of the death of Mahatma Gandhi, who will surely not waver from his resolve to fast unto death if you do not desist even now from acts of lawlessness".

Congress President's Castigation

Acharya J. B. Kripalani, Congress President, addressing the meeting said: I could have understood if the stalwarts among you had gone by rail or foot to

Noakhali and tried to save your brethren, but I cannot understand your actions here against people who have done no harm to you. I could never think that you would repeat the same things in Bihar which happened in East Bengal. By indulging in such foolish acts you have only helped your enemies inside and outside the country and have proved traitors to the country's cause. Two wrongs can never make one right. Even in war, certain principles of civilised behaviour have to be observed. Do you think you will be serving the Hindu religion by killing and injuring Muslims, men, women and children ?

"Mahatma Gandhi, who first unfurled the flag of Satyagraha here, could never think that you will behave in such a way. You must remember that by these actions you have gone directly against all that Mahatma Gandhi stands for and has been preaching throughout his life. You must not forget that you shall have to live, both Hindus and Muslims, together in this land. Neither the Hindus nor the Muslims can exterminate or turn out each other from the sacred soil of Mother India. You must ponder over and think if it is desirable to live in peace and amity or in chaos and insecurity. I leave it to you to solve it yourself. I hope you will not force Mahatma Gandhi to undertake a fast unto death for the good of your country, your religion and your community. I appeal to you to desist from this violence against your neighbours."

Earlier in the morning, Pandit Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, addressing a public meeting in Dinapore, exhorted the people to maintain peace.

"CO-OPERATE WITH MILITARY"

Addressing a meeting at Gaya on November 6, *Pandit Nehru* asked the people to fraternise and co-operate with the military in restoring peace and order. Military personnel were friends of the people, he said, because with the changed circumstance no barrier now existed between the people and the military.

Appealing to the people to maintain communal peace and harmony, Pandit Nehru said that people were losing the chance of obtaining real swaraj by frittering away their energy in a fratricidul war in which neighbours felt afraid and insecure of each other.

Speaking at Bhagalpur on November 5, Pandit Nehru rebuked the people of the province for their lawlesseness and advised students and other young men to take up the task of restoring peace in the rural areas without loss of time. What they had done had horrified him and terribly shaken Mahatma Gandhi. They should come to their senses at least now and realise that as a majority community it was their bounden duty to give protection to members of the minority community. He also asked them to render all help to the refugees who had been evacuated from disturbed areas instead of shifting that responsibility to the Muslims alone.

Sardar Nishtar's Appeal

Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar, who also addressed the meeting, said that what he and Pandit Nehru had seen in the affected areas had pained them most. He believed that the illiterate masses had been misled to commit acts of lawlessness. He, however, asked the people to forget the past and strtve to put a stop to the orgy of violence. Such acts of lawlessness could never form part of a political fight, he said. It was the duty of the majority community, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar said, be it Hindu or Muslim, to protect the minority community who should be considered their special charge. Unless people realised this and acted accordingly, the trouble would spread. The East Bengal affair had been condemned by all right thinking Muslims and retaliation would worsen rather than help matters. He appealed to Muslims not to act in a manner as to aggravate the trouble.

GANDHIJI'S WARNING BROADCAST

Hundreds of thousands of leaflets carrying the news of Mahatma Gandhi's projected fast unto death if violence did not stop at once in Bihar were dropped from the air throughout the affected areas of Patna, Gaya, Monghyr districts.

Troops Open Fire

The Bakr-Id passed off on the 5th November peacefully throughout the Province and no incident in connection therewith has been reported, stated the Director of Publicity, Government of Bihar on the 6th. November. He added :

The situation otherwise is unchanged in the affected areas of Patna, Gaya and Monghyr districts. In Agarnusa area in Patna district the troops had to open fire on a riotous mob which refused to disperse. The casualties are believed to be about one hundred killed and many injured. Troops are carrying out intensive patrolling deep into the rural areas, Patna town is all quiet except for an alarm last night which proved to be nothing serious.

Gaya : Trouble is reported from Makhdumpur and Ghosi police stations. Casualties are estimated to be between 30 to 40 killed. Eight deaths are reported also from Bodhgaya police station. In Belaganj, one rioter was killed. More troops have been despatched to the affected areas.

Monghyr : The situation in Tarapur-Kharagpur-Bariarpur sector remains serious and further casualties are reported. Cases of arson have also occurred. Residents in the danger zone have been safely evacuated. More troops have been despatched. Refugee camps have been opened in Tarapur and elsewhere and are being duly guarded. Disturbances occurred in Jamalpur town on the night of November 4 resulting in 20 deaths. Twenty-four hour curfew was imposed immediately. Bhagalpur town is quiet. But tension is reported from Pirpainti and Colgong areas. As a result of an incident in Banka, one person was killed and four injured.

Relief operations : Adequate arrangements are being made for receiving and looking after the comforts of the refugees in Patna and other places. A number of officers have been placed on special duty in connection with relief operations.

OVER 400 KILLED IN PATNA DISTRICT

As a result of the arrival of more troops the situation in some of the badly affected areas shows signs of improvement, stated the Director of Publicity, Government of Bihar, on the 7th November,

East Patna district now remains the most disturbed locality in the province. The entire area north of the Ganges continues to be quiet.

Patna : Patna town remains quiet. The eastern areas of the district, however, record a number of incidents some of them of a serious nature. In Hilsa the situation has been brought under control due to military action. The total number of casualties in the locality of village Nagarnausa in Chandi police station is estimated at four to five hundred killed. This does not include those who died as a result of firing by the military reported yesterday. Cases of arson were reported from village Juri and Vadai in Giriak police station. Twenty-five deaths occurred in village Zaira in Silao police station.

Gaya : Jehanabad area is reported to be quiet. Trouble broke out in a village in Khezarsari police station and some persons are reported to have been killed.

Monghyr : The situation in Tarapur, Bariarpur and Kharagpur sector of the Monghyr District, which was the storm centre of trouble, is now reported to be quiet. Two hundred and twenty-six dead bodies have been recovered from village Kharbatu and around four miles as a result of incidents reported earlier. On November 4 two persons were killed and two injured in a coolie train bringing workers to Jamalpur. The police dispersed a mob in village Abaia, near Monghyr. Enquiries revealed that twenty casualties had occurred in that village before the arrival of the police.

Evacuees : A large number of refugees have been escorted safely by the military and the police and are now sheltered in relief camps,

Casualty figures : On the basis of facts in their possession, Government propose to issue consolidated statement of casualties up-to-date.

VICEROY'S TOUR

The Viceroy, accompanied by Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar, Communications Member, Interim Government, and Major General Russell, Officer Commanding, Fifth Indian Division, who was then in charge of the troops deployed in the riot-affected areas of the province, left Patna at 9 a. m, on the 8th November for an aerial survey of the affected areas.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, accompanied by Mr. Jaiprakash Narain and Mr. Anugraha Narain Singh, Finance Minister of Bihar, left Patna by car to visit the affected areas in the eastern parts of the district, They visited Futwa, Hilsa and Negarnausa and returned in the evening.

Nehru's Call to Students

Pandit Nehru, who addressed students assembled at the Patna University on the 8th November evening, urged them to give up their studies for the time being and go to the affected villages in Bihar and work to alleviate the sufferings of the people. People in the rural areas, he said, had become very panicky and suspicious of their neighbours. No civilised society could exist undar these conditions. It was imperative, therefore, that the morale of the people should be toned up and their confidence restored.

As Pandit Nehru arrived, a crowd of people staged a demonstration at the gates of the University. The demonstrators held up Pandit Nehru for a few minutes, shouting "Go back, Nehru". Some of the demonstrators entered the hall and continued to interrupt Pandit Nehru's speech.

Pandit Nehru referred to the demonstration in his speech and said that no doubt the military firings in the province had agitated the minds of a section of the people. He was sorry himself that the military had to be employed in quelling the disturbances.

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain*, who also addressed the meeting, rebuked those who had staged the demonstration and said they had disgraced the student community and the province as a whole by so insulting a leader of Pandit Nehru's eminence.

Referring to the military firings, he asked what was the Government to do if people began looting and murdering those who did not subscribe to their views. Such actions could not be countenanced by any civilised Government. There was no reason why such persons should not be shot down. By creating such disturbances, these elements had proved traitors to their country and put obstacles on the path of the cherished goal of freedom. Why should any mercy be shown to them?

In Stalin's Russia, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain said, people had to be shot down in hundreds and thousands when they retarded the country's cause. There was no reason why people who had helped in retarding the cause of freedom by creating these disturbances, and killing and maiming people of another community should not deserve the same fate.

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain asked the student community to rise up to the occasion and take up the task of restoring normal conditions even at the cost of their studies. However, he did not want volunteers who would go to Ministers asking for the comforts of life before offering their services for such noble work. He wanted them to move about on foot, if necessary, and live a life of austerity and carry on the work of rehabilitation.

DISTINCT IMPROVEMENT IN SITUATION

Reports received up to 8th November from the affected areas indicated a distinct improvement in the situation and justified the assumption that the peak of the tension had passed, several factors having contributed to it, according to the Director of Publicity, Government of Bihar.

The whirlwind tour of the disturbed areas by top-ranking leaders like Pandit Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya J. B. Kripalani and others, the persistent peace efforts of local Hindu and Muslim leaders and the report of Mahatma Gandhi's threatened fast unto death appeared to have produced a favourable reaction.

Pandit Nehru's Impressions

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said at Patna on the 19th. November that 'generally speaking, the situation in Bihar is very well in hand and no major development is expected in future."

In an interview with the Associated Press of America. Pandit Nehru said: "What had happened is bad enough. The situation was bad in the three districts of Patna, Gaya and Monghyr. But it is much better now for the last three days and no major incident has been reported from anywhere in the province."

Pandit Nehru added that "it appears that certain criminal elements, dacoits and the like, are now functioning in some areas, taking advantage of the disturbed condition, but the situation has been brought under control."

Pandit Nehru continued: "It is very difficult to assess the exact number of people killed, wounded and stranded, but it can never be probably over 2,000 killed at the utmost on all counts, including military firing."

"I am submitting a daily report of my study of the situation to Mahatma Gandhi," Pandit Nehru said, adding, "Though, I am leaving for New Delhi today, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Jai Prakash Narain are staying on."

The Associated Press of India stated:

Pandit Nehru arrived here on November 3 along with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar by air. He came on a two-day visit but decided to stay on for a longer period till the situation improved considerably. During his stay here for one week, he held discussions about the situation in the province with the Viceroy, the Governor of Bihar, Lt.-General Bucher, G. O. C., Eastern Command, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya J. B. Kripalani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, the Provincial Ministers, prominent Muslim Leaguers of Bengal and Bihar and a number of officials and local Congress leaders.

He visited a number of refugee camps and hospitals where the injured persons had been admitted and had a strenuous programme throughout in conducting whirlwind tours in the riot-affected areas of the districts of Patna, Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Gaya by air, rail and car. He addressed several meetings both in urban and rural areas, appealing to the people for the restoration of peace and sanity.

Everywhere the response to Pandit Nehru's appeal was remarkable, except at a meeting of students of Patna held last evening, where a section of the people who had been excited over the result of the firing at different places, held demonstrations against him. Pandit Nehru, however, managed to assuage their feelings.

Minister's Review

Mr. *Anugraha Narain Singh*, Finance Minister of Bihar said at Patna on the 9th. November that what had happened in Bihar was a continuation of the Calcutta killing and one cannot be considered separately from the other."

Mr. Sinha said that many of those who died in Bengal especially, had their relatives and friends in Bihar and therefore such communal disturbances must be studied against the background of India as a whole."

Mr. Sinha declared that "it was as much difficult to assess exactly the number of killed and wounded as it is to signify the extent of the disturbed areas in terms of exact square miles. The disturbances have been so sparsely distributed in the districts that you cannot signify the area in square miles", he said.

The Finance Minister examplified his remarks by saying that in Patna district, which has four thousand villages, the affected villages were about 100 and they too not in one continuous area. He indicated that there are about 4,000 military personnel in the province comprising of British, Muslim and Hindu troops who are spreading out and taking "good control of the situation." Of the 40,000,000 souls in Bihar, he said, there are over five million Muslims. The Finance Minister thought it would be "a mad venture to guess at figures now," he added and "2,000 killed all told may not be far wrong, though even that is a conjecture."

The food position in Bihar is becoming serious in view of the disturbances, Mr. Sinha said, but the places are not inaccessible like East Bengal, and therefore the question of aerial dropping of food does not arise.

He indicated that Bihar had requisitioned buses, taxicabs and lorries in the province both for relief work and for carrying food-stuffs into the interior.

Mr. J. P. Narain's Impressions

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain*, who arrived in Patna by air on Thursday and visited some of the worst affected areas in the Province in the company of Pandit Nehru, told the A. P. A.:

"I personally visited Nagar Nausa and discussed the situation with the non-officials and the military officer commanding the area. Fantastic reports have appeared in the Press about Nagar Nausa killing. In my estimate only 40 were killed in the area by rioting and when the military, taking a serious view of the situation, opened fire less than 100 more were killed by military action. Some reports have been published of the military excesses when restoring order, but it is difficult to say how far they are true.

"My impression after the tour of the areas is that the situation is definitely under control and mob frenzy is positively going down.

"It is very difficult to give accurate figures of casualties, but the number cannot be over 2,000 killed by military action. After the immediate remedy is obtained by the use of force against all mischief-makers, the next important task is bringing back the public mind to normal health by sound campaign in their midst."

Dealing with some of the causes that started the Bihar trouble, Mr. Jai Prakash said: "Firstly, there was the mass feeling aroused by the Noakhali tragedies. Secondly, criminal elements and anti-Congress organisations worked from behind. Thirdly, Muslims started some trouble here and there. Fourthly, and the most important of all, the British element in the police and civil services had a hand in the whole thing, especially those who stood to suffer under the Congress Government for their activities in crushing the 1942 August rising."

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain said that "Coalition Governments will be no solution to the present ills. Real coalition can only come about if there is understandings and a spirit of goodwill between the parties concerned. To demand coalition at the point of the dagger is blackmail and can lead to no coalition."

Official Estimate of Casualties

Mr. *J. Bowstead*, Chief Secretary, the Government of Bihar, said at Patna on the 12th November, that figures of persons killed in Bihar riots collected by the Government have gone upto 2,655. The figure was not complete and did not include bodies that might have been thrown into rivers or burnt away.

The Chief Secretary added that "it will be safe to assume that all told the number of killed in the Province from all causes including police and military firing would be on the borderland of 5,000. The number of injured that has so far been collected from all the districts excepting Monghyr and Gaya is 438.

He added that the number of villages burnt in Patna district came to 66. Figures for other districts were being collected. Mr. Bowstead indicated that two brigades of seven battalions composed of about 8,000 men were working in the affected areas of Bihar and that planes are regularly doing reconnaissance work day and night and reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities for necessasy and immediate action.

The Chief Secretary said that the outbreak followed the Noakhali protest meetings in the province and spread from Chapra along a belt of the area south of the Ganges. He, however, indicated that "the situation has been brought under complete control and that no fresh incident has been reported from anywhere in Bihar for the last three days."

Mr. Bowstead said that senior civilian officers have been appointed in each district to work with the military and to act in a liasion capacity between them and the Government and "it is producing excellent result in establishing perfect co-ordination of the task between the military and the civil authorities in restoring order out of chaos in Bihar."

Mr. Jinnah on Bihar Killing

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, issued the following statement from New Delhi on the 11th November :—

"This is not the time for me to add anything to what is already so very clear to every honest, thinking and intelligent man. There is no limit to the false propaganda that is being carried on to throw the blame on the Muslim League and the Muslims for the happenings in various parts of India. There is no foundation or justification for making wild and false allegations against the Muslim League, but this is not the moment for me to deal with them or pass judgment.

"I know that the Muslims have suffered heavily and are suffering. But the tragedy of Bihar has eclipsed what are mere specks elsewhere. I condemn brutality in any shape or form, but the Bihar tragedy has no parallel or precedent in this record of cold-blooded butchery of the Muslim minority in the various parts of the country committed by the majority Hindu community.

"While I can quite understand that there is grave provocation and resentment among the Muslims of India, I wish to caution them that retaliation or vengeance in the Muslim majority provinces for what has happened in Bihar, and is happening in other parts of India, will be a terrible catastrophe and a blunder on our part, both morally or politically, and we shall be only playing into the hands of our enemies.

"If you really want to achieve Pakistan, I pray to God that Muslim honour should not be sullied by inhuman, degrading and brutal happenings of the kind that have taken place in Bihar. We should not sink low in the scales of civilisation. morality and humanity. While our hearts may bleed for the suffering we cannot sanction cowardly inhuman massacres of the innocent in other places where Muslims happened to be in the majority.

"We must prove politically that we are brave. generous and trustworthy. that in the Pakistan areas, the minorities will enjoy the fullest security of life, property and honour, just as the Musalmans themselves—nay, even greater. If the Muslims lose their balance and give vent to the spirit of vengeance and retaliation, and prove false to the highest codes of morality and preachings of our great religion, Islam, you will not only lose your title to the claim of Pakistan, but also it will start a most vicious circle of bloodshed and cruelty, which will at once put off the day of our freedom, and we shall only be helping to prolong the period of our slavery and bondage.

"I am glad that so far the Muslim majority provinces have been peaceful and immune from this virus of holocaust and I hope and trust that they will not lose their balance and will not resort to revenge or retaliation, however deeply they may feel from what they read and hear of the terrible happenings, especially in Bihar.

"I, thererore, most fervently and earnestly appeal to the Muslims, where they are in the majority, to do their best to protect and defend the non-Muslims and do everything that lies in their power to create a complete sense of security and confidence among the non-Muslim minorities. The sufferings of the Muslims in the minority provinces and the terrific death roll and the butchery that has taken place will not go in vain. This sacrifice will, I am sure, establish our claim to Pakistan. Those who have died, who have been wounded and have suffered loss and destruction of property, may take some consolation that they have suffered and made their contribution for our freedom and the achievement of Pakistan."

Statement by the Bengal League Secretary

Mr. *Abul Hashim*, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, issued the following statement in Calcutta on the Bihar disturbances on the 8th November :—

"Messrs. A. K. Fazlul Huq, F. Rahman, Dr. Malek and I returned from Patna this morning. The people of Bengal must be anxious to know what has happened in Bihar. Complete lawlessness prevailed over an area of 4,000 square miles, covering the six districts of Bihar—Patna, Gaya, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Chapra and Monghyr. It is extremely difficult for anybody now to give accurate figures of casualties as there is complete chaos and confusion everywhere. There is no means of communication and there is deliberate suppression of authentic news by the local authorities. It is enough to know that there has been ruthless general massacre in those districts; even women and children were not spared. Respectable Muslim women saved their honour by commiting suicide, by jumping into wells. Thousands of refugees, who rushed from the villages towards the railway stations for safety, were waylaid and killed mercilessly. The number of refugees now totals more than 50,000. At some places the gallant Muslims defended themselves for two or three days without food and resources, but ultimately had to give way and were massacred mercilessly.

"The whole affair was conducted in an organized manner. The disturbances broke out on Oct. 24. Till Nov. 1, the Government of Bihar and their officials took absolutely no notice of the situation. The military were called out on Nov. 1. but the actual military operations did not begin before Nov. 6. Until the arrival of Pandit Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the Government of Bihar took no steps whatsoever to stop the killing, to give protection to the Muslims, to evacuate them from threatened areas to places of safety and to give medical help or food to the refugees who, after few days of hard struggle, somehow managed to reach Patna and other quarters, wounded and half dead.

"Thanks to Pandit Nehru's indefatigable effort, there is now some consolation for the distressed Muslims. Khwaja Nazimuddin and Mr. Raghib Ahsan, President and Secretary of the Bihar Relief Committee, are working at Patna."

League Leaders' Estimate of Casualties

"The number of killed in Bihar will be high in five figures and twice the number of wounded," said a joint statement issued by Fazlul Rahman, M.L.A. and Dr. A. M. Malek M. L. A., members of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League delegation which visited some of the disturbed areas in Bihar. The statement reads:

"The Bihar carnage began on Oct. 26, which coincided with the observance of Noakhali Day in many parts of the province. The happenings in Calcutta and East Bengal pale into insignificance in comparison with what happened in Bihar. Though it is very difficult to give an accurate estimate of those killed and wounded, it is certain, according to various sources, that the number of persons killed will be high in five figures and twice the number of wounded. Those who escaped death and were rendered homeless could be counted in lakhs. In Patna town alone, the number of refugees, including the wounded and those in hospitals, would come to about 50,000. Every Muslim home has, to our knowledge, became a refugee camp. The loss of property would run into crores. In one house alone, that of an M.L.A. (Central), moveable property worth about Rs. 1½ lakhs was lost.

"The nature of atrocities committed is indescribable. Many hundred of villages have been reduced to ashes.

"The whole thing was deliberate and planned. The actual method of operation during the carnage was precipitated by the withdrawal of officers of a particular community, both police and executive, from vantage positions. Press campaigns, inflammatory speeches by leaders in setting the masses against the people of the minority community, and subsequent indifference of the Ministry to control the situation, disclosed a deliberate plan for the annihilation of one community of the province.

"The military was nominally called on Nov. 1, about a week following the outbreak of the carnage. The Chief Minister is reported to have told a peace conference, consisting of Hindus and Muslims of Patna, that, so long as he continued as Chief Minister, he would not allow his countrymen to be shot by troops. The unfortunate statement of the Chief Minister spread wildly to the affected areas and made rioters carry on their acts of depredations fearless of consequences. As a matter of fact, when hooligans committed arson, murder and looting in the presence of armed police forces, the later did not open fire. All news of the catastrophe were so successfully censored by the Bihar Government that the outside world, even the neighbouring province of Bengal, could not get for a long time the slightest idea of what was happening in Bihar. Even private letters and telegrams sent by the victims to their relatives were not permitted to reach them. It was only when the refugees began to pour into Bengal that the Provincial Muslim League here realized the gravity of the situation and sent a delegation.

"Khwaja Nazimuddin on his arrival on Nov. 6 at Patna, met Pandit Nehru, the Chief Minister of Bihar and Lt.-Gen Bucher at conference. The decisions taken were to the effect that

"1. The military would petrol the affected and threatened areas, and military pickets would be posted and they would open fire when necessary.

"2. Transport and escort would be provided to evacuate and carry refugees to places of safety.

"3. With a view to preventing further trouble, an ordinance would be promulgated to control the Press, bind down the suspects, arrest persons inciting violence and impose punitive taxes.

"4. Adequate medical help would be provided by the military in the affected areas.

"5. Immediate steps would be taken to feed and clothe victims in the effected areas.

"6. Accomomdation, feeding and clothing for refugees in the towns would be provided.

"7. Regular rescue parties would be formed by the Government, and Muslim volunteers would be asked to accompany them.

"Till the morning of Nov. 8 the delegation found to their sorrow that these decisions were not at all carried out in most of the places. The delegation with some Muslim League leaders, met the Chief Minister at his residence where the Revenue and Local Self-Government Ministers were also present. The Chief Minister virtually admitted that he could not make proper and sufficient arrangements for the rescue and evacuation of the affected people, and for the distribution of food, clothes and medicines for want of trucks. The Chief Minister further informed the delegation that he had no idea of the disposition of the military in the affected areas and that he had no information whether they had taken up position by that time.

"In this connexion, the Chief Minister told the members of the delegation that on hearing the news of the disturbances in Chapra, he flew from Ranchi to Patna and from there to Chapra, and having realized the gravity of the situation there he returned to Patna on Oct. 28 and contacted the local commander of the army, who agreed that troops would patrol Patna town. But even on Oct. 30 the Chief Minister was told by two of his colleagues that no patrolling by the military took place till then. It was only on Nov. 5 that the final decision was taken that troops would be allowed to operate in the affected arreas.

"We are told that. even on Nov. 7, the Ministry, on inquiry from the local commander, could not be definite if all the units had been posted. The Chief Minister stated that he met the Viceroy at Patna on his way from Calcutta and asked for military help from him. The Viceroy replied he would have to consider the needs of the whole of India and not of Bihar alone. In short, the Chief Minister only expressed his helplessness to cope with the situation.

"Murder, arson and looting are still going on unabated. Even when we were leaving Patna on the evening of Nov. 8, we came to know that, in the morning, when Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar and the Viceroy had an aerial survey of portions of the affected areas, they noticed fresh arson in some villages. On Saturday night, we received a telephonic message of fresh outbreaks of violence in the province.

"Though the Ministry has proved a complete failure and ineffective to bring the situation under control, we must put on record our appreciation of the services of Pandit Nehru for the restoration of peace. It would be better, we feel, for Mr. Gandhi, instead of spending time in Noakhali where peace has been restored, to proceed to Bihar to use his influence with his co-religionists to quell the disturbances. As Muslims cannot depend entirely on the Bihar Government for the protection of their lives and property, and for the provision of relief, the Muslim League has to set up its own relief and rescue organization. The pressing needs in this regard are now of trucks, medicines, warm clothing, blankets, doctors and nurses.

Pandit Nehru on the Riots

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a detailed statement on the communal troubles, in the Central Assembly at New Delhi on the 14th November, said that the Bihar situation was brought completely under control after a week and was quiet now. "Evidence of a return to normality is the desire of the people to return to their villages. The great problem there now is how to rehabilitate the people. The Bihar Government have undertaken the responsibility to lodge, feed and provide other necessaries including medical relief to the evacuees."

Referring to East Bengal, Pandit Nehru said that recent reports from reliable witnesses had drawn particular attention to the vital problem of restoring women who were abducted and forcibly converted. "This problem is not only important in itself but also because of its all-india repercussions. It is, therefore, urgently necessary that every possible step should be taken, with all possible speed, to restore them to their people. Only then can a beginning be made of rehabilitation in East Bengal."

"Recent events around and near Delhi must be fresh in the minds of members", he added. "It is time that we put an end to all this sorry business all over India, and I trust that every sensitive Indian, whatever his political views might be, will co-operate with others in this vital and urgent task."

The following is the full text of the statement, which was made by Pt. Nehru in reply to a short notice question put by Mr. Madandhari Singh and Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqui :

"I have accepted these short-notice questions, not without hesitation, for it is no easy matter to deal with them. Any proper survey of the communal troubles in the country would be a big undertaking, hardly suited for a relatively brief answer to a question. Yet I have welcomed these questions, for it is the right of honourable members to inquire into matters of the most vital significance to the country and of the House to know what the Government is doing about them. The house will realise that the subject is one which has excited passion all over the country and rightly agitated people's minds. It is difficult to deal with it without raising controversies which embitter. It is not my purpose or desire to say anything which would add to this bitterness or raise a fresh controversy in this House.

NO DESIRE TO SUPPRESS FACTS

"The newspapers are full of communal troubles and riots and bloody murder and much worse. No one, certainly not the Government, desires to suppress facts. This House must be seized of the facts so that it may form proper judgment and devise remedies. The facts are bad enough, terribly bad. And yet what often appears in the newspapers is something far removed from facts and the manner of presentation is such as to inflame public passion. I trust and, I am sure, the House will agree with me, that it is the duty of all of us, and more especially of the members, to be exceedingly careful in these days of crisis and disaster, to take every care not to say or do anything which might excite the people and worsen an already bad situation. One of the worst features of the situation is the dominance of rumour which exaggerates everything and sometimes creates out of nothing. The most fantastic accounts spread rapidly and are believed in. We have to suffer not only insecurity and public disorder, but some thing which is even worse because it feeds and nurtures that disorder. This is anarchy of the mind. It is just when crisis faces us that we have to maintain equilibrium of our minds.

"To give an account of the communal trouble in the country is to deal with a chain of events going back into the past. One evil action leads to another which again becomes the ostensible cause of further evil. The preaching and practice of hatred and violence inevitably sow seeds which yield bitter fruit. If we sow the wind we have to reap the whirlwind.

INTERIM GOVT.'S EFFORTS

"Ever since the Interim Government took charge of affairs they have been intensely occupied with these communal troubles. The House will remember that this Government took office very soon after what is called the Great Calcutta Killing which began on the 16th August. All our work was shadowed by these events and we tried our utmost to deal with this situation. The House know that the Government of India may not interfere, under the existing Constitution, with Provincial Autonomy. In so far as any one can interefere under this Constitution, it is the Governor-General and not the Governor-General-in-Council.

"Nevertheless, as Indians in responsible position to whom the country looked for guidance, we tried our utmost to help. Throughout this unhappy period, whether it was in Calcutta or elsewhere in India, Noakhali and East Bengal or Bihar, the Government was actually conscious of their responsibilities and keenly desirous of combating the peril that had encompassed the country. There has been much public criticism of our seeming inaction because necessarily we could not function in public in regard to these matters. If facts were known, I do not think that this criticism would be considered to be justified.

METHODS OF VIOLENCE MUST GO

"A succession of events, which are known to this House, led to the Great Calcutta Killing. That was followed by the Great tragedy of Noakhali and East Bengal, and that again led to the terrible happenings in Bihar. And now Bihar is leading to other outbursts of brutality and violence. There appears to be a competition in murder and brutality and unless we put a stop to this, the immediate future of our country is dark. That it can be put a stop to, I have little doubt. Not by a reliance on mere armed force, thoug that may be necessary occasionally, but by the efforts of all those who influence public opinion can we put an end to this horror which comes in the way of all political and social progress, and, indeed, which is already making life a burden for many of us. It must be clearly accepted that we cannot settle any problem by the methods of hatred and violence.

BACKGROUND OF THE BIHAR TRAGEDY

"Recently I have come into intimate contact with masses of people in Bihar and I saw the horrors that a simple and likable peasantry can perpetrate when it loses all balance and sanity. I found that during the Calcutta killing a large number of Biharis had lost their lives. Their relatives had returned to Bihar together with many other refugees and had spread all over the rural areas carrying stories of what had happened in Calcutta. The people of Bihar were stirred profoundly. Then came news of Noakhali and East Bengal. These stories, and more especially the accounts of abduction and rape of women and forcible conversion of large numbers of people infuriated the populace. For some time they looked to the Central Government and hoped that this would give relief and afford protection. When they did not see any such help or protection forthcoming, they grew bitter and criticised strongly the Interim Government for its apparent inactivity.

"Various incidents occurred in Bihar which added to the general excitement. Towards the end of October there was trouble in Chapra district and in Bhagalpur city. This was soon suppressed. Then came, on October 31, trouble on a big scale in Patna district, overflowing into Gaya and Monghyr districts. It was in essence a mass uprising, large numbers of peasants burning and killing mercilessly. As always happens on such occasions, criminal and anti-social elements took part and even took the lead in certain areas. One of the difficulties of the situation was that the areas could not be easily reached because of lack of communications and flooded conditions.

"This mass uprising lasted almost exactly one week. Just as it started suddenly, it ended also equally suddenly. This rapid ending of widespread movement, which was on the verge of spreading to other districts, was remarkable. The military of course, came in at a somewhat later stage and helped in restoring order. But a much more powerful factor in this restorarion of order was the effort of a large number of persons, chiefly Biharis, who spread out all over the villages and came face to face with the peasant masses. The news of Mahatma Gandhi's proposed fast had also had a powerful effect.

"CASUALTIES GROSSLY EXAGGERATED"

"Grossly exaggerated accounts have appeared of the number of casualties during these troubles caused both by infuriated mobs and by military firing. It is difficult to give at present even approximately accurate figures of casualties. But it can be said with certainty that some of the figures appearing in newspapers are completely wrong. They are usually based on accounts of panic-stricken refugees who had lost all balance for judgment.

"The Bihar situation was brought completely under control after a week and is quiet now. Evidence to a return to normality is the desire of people to return to their villages. The great problem there now is how to rehabilitate these people. The Bihar Government have undertaken the responsibility to lodge, feed and and provide other necessaries, including medical relief to the evacuees. I understand that they also propose to give financial assistance to the sufferers in order to help rehabilitation.

"As I have stated, the news from and about Noakhali created a very profound feeling in Bihar and the rest of India. I am not in a position to say much about the present conditions in East Bengal. But recent reports from reliable witnesses have drawn particular attention to the vital problem of restoring women who were abducted and forcibly converted. The problem is not only important in itself but also because of its All-India repercussions. It is, therefore, urgently necessary that every possible step should be taken, with all possible speed, to restore them to their people. Only then can a beginning be made of rehabilitation in East Bengal.

It is clearly the duty of the State to give every possible assistance to the sufferers from these disturbances. I hope that provincial Governments will undertake this duty in adequate measure. This will help also in producing a feeling of security among the people and a psychological atmosphere for a return to normality. Recent events around and near Delhi must be fresh in the minds of members. It is time that we put and end to all this sorry business all over India, and I trust that every sensitive Indian whatever his political views might be, will co-operate with others in this vital and urgent task.

The Garmuktesar Riots

The Garmuktesar Fair near Hapur is normally one of the happiest of U.P. *melas*. Villagers, singing in chorus, journey by bullock carts to bathe in the Ganges on the auspicious night. The river's banks are dotted with tents, and there is plenty of funs in the side-shows. This year, on the 8th of November, a petty quarrel at a merry-go-round saw 46 people killed and 39 injured. The U. P. Area military authorities, in co-operation with the civil authorities, took prompt measures to suppress the riot and columns of troops proceeded to the affected villages, said a press note.

The mela crowd having dispersed in all directions from Garmuktesar, trouble spread to the outlying areas in the district where no quick means of communication existed and difficulty was therefore being experienced in locating them. The Commander, U. P. Area, had instructed the Sub-area Commander, Meerut, to charter a plane and make a reconnaissance flight to find the trouble spots, where troops were to be despatched immediately.

As a precautionary measure against the possible spread of trouble to the adjoining districts, columns of troops were despatched to the north east and south of Garmuktesar to Shahranpur, Muzafarnagar, Aligarh, Etawah and Moradabad.

Eye-witnesses accounts reaching Delhi on the 9th November spoke of serious disturbances in and near Meerut during the return of pilgrims from Garmuktesar. One of the reports reaching Delhi stated that some 46 persons, including women and children, were killed and about 25 seriously injured in Shajahanpur, 18 miles from Meerut, on the Meerut-Garmuktesar road,

As eye-witness stated that pilgrims returning from Garmuktesar in some 15 bullock carts were attacked at this village. Two of the carts with a large number of occupants were burnt. Some 23 bodies with stab wounds and the charred remains of two children were found near the scene. What happened to the occupants of the other carts could not be definitely ascertainable but most of them might have escaped. A dozen bullocks were found killed. A party of troops arrived and took charge of the wounded which included a number of women suffering from severe burns, stab wounds, or the effects of criminal assault.

Srimati Mirdula Ben Sarabhai, General Secretary of the Congress who was in Meerut, heard of the trouble brewing in Shajahanpur and rushed in her car to the village in an effort to stop the pilgrims from entering the village. But she was too late to warn the people travelling in the fifteen bullock carts. The carts were attacked on the road running right through the village.

A second incident was reported near Ghaziabad, about 10 miles from Delhi, where a train bringing pilgrims from Garmuktesar was stopped and attacked by a mob of about 50 persons .The passengers, however, resisted and beat off the attackers, some of whom were injured. Some of the passengers were also injured.

A further report stated that nine dead bodies from Dasna, a village near Ghaziabad, were brought to Delhi. Four injured persons from the same village were admitted to hospital.

Ten people were fatally stabbed and about 50 seriously injured until the even- in Meerut city on the 9th November. A number of arrests were made for breach of the curfew.

U. P. Ministers' Appeal

Pandit *G. B. Pant*, Premier and Mr. *Rafi Ahmed Kidwai*, Home Minister, United Provinces, in a statement on the 12th November said :—

"We are filled with shame and sorrow over the recent happenings in certain parts of the Meerut District. It is not possible to express adequately our sentiments or to find suitable language to condemn these brutal atrocities. We are anxious to trace the foul miscreants who were at the bottom of and responsible for these ferocious deeds which have the appearance of being taken for this purpose.

"It is believed that they were mostly reckless ruffians from outside our Province. The law will take its course and we wish that the perpetrators of this crime may soon meet with the fate they deserve. There is some discontent, and certain complaints have been made against some of those who were charged with the delicate and difficult task of maintaining law and oeder in the prevailing conditions. At present we have to concentrate on the restoration of public peace which should be the foremost duty of everyone in the existing circumstances.

"But we will examine the complaints and consider all suggestions as soon as we are free and conditions permit us to do so. We offer our heartfelt sympathy to the innocent victims of wanton atrocities. We have taken measures for the relief of sufferers and are appointing a Committee with Mr. Ismail Khan as President, Chaudhury Raghubir Narain Singh, Sri Khusiram, Nawab Jamshed Ali Khan and Maulvi Lutfail Khan as members and Mr. Malcolm as officer in charge of relief and rehabilitation.

"We wish all speedy measures may be taken at the cost of the Government towards this end. Extra police and military detachments have been brought and stationed in the city and the countryside to meet adequately the situation. The officers have adequate staff at their disposal and we trust that normal conditions will be restored soon. The authorities have instructions to take stern action and to use full and effective forces to quell the disturbances, They will be free to use all possible means in the interest of public order and public safety and wherever necessary will make use of the arms and weapons provided for that purpose.

"Meerut District is being declared a disturbed area. Detailed orders about various matters arising out of this declaration will be issued later.

"We are grateful for the valuable assistance we have received from the Brigadier of the region and other Defence Services.

"It will be realised and appreciated that whatever the Government may do, peace cannot be maintained undisturbed except with the willing and active co-operation of the public. Whatever differences there may be, political or otherwise, the path of violence will not resolve them : it will have to be abjured. The spirit of retaliation, which has already worked tremendous havoc, must be completely exorcised and extinguished and the innate dignity and sanctity of human life regardless of creed or caste must be accepted as the basic condition of civilised existence. Even if complete harmony and concord is not established forthwith, everyone must resolve at least to keep to peaceful methods and not to stoop to lawless or violent means even in cases of grave provocation.

"Peace Committees, with Chaudhury Raghubir Narain Singh and Mr. Ismail Khan as President and consisting of representatives of all sections of thought and opinion, have been organised for the district and city respectively. We earnestly hope and pray that they may succeed in achieving their objective and establish complete concord among all communities."

Formation of Interim Government

Sardar Patel Replies to Mr. Jinnah

In reply to Mr. Jinnah's Press statement, soon after the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, Sardar *Vallabhbhai Patel*, addressing a meeting at Bombay on the 2nd August in celebration of the Tilak anniversary, said that if Mr. Jinnah meant business, it was up to him to make a friendly approach to the Congress and drop all hints and threats of direct action.

Such threats, he said, were directed not against the British but against the Congress. The British had already declared their willingness to leave the country. It was in the interests of the Muslims to give up their present attitude and co-operate with the Congress in the achievement of speedy independence for India.

Sardar Patel maintained that the Congress would not yield to pressure tactics, namely, threat of direct action. It would never compromise on its main principles.

The Muslim League could not prove to the Cabinet Mission during the recent deliberations in Delhi and Simla its case for Pakistan. It had, therefore, accepted rejection of the Pakistan demand by the Cabinet Mission. It was unwise now to revive the old cry.

" Mr. Jinnan," Sardar Patel said, " has referred to me as being responsible for the League's discomfiture and alleges that some secret deal had been made by me on behalf of the Congress with the Cabinet Delegation. Mr. Jinnah has not so far been able to produce any evidence in support of his allegation. In fact, I would say it was Mr. Jiunah who entered into a secret understanding and obtained promises behind the back of the Congress, which, in the nature of things, could not be fulfilled. He, therefore, complains now of the non-fulfilment of those pledges and assurances and he is naturally angry. The Congress has nothing to hide. It always placed its cards openly on the table. Mr. Jinnah tried to outwit the Congress and failed.

" Sir Stafford Cripps, an eminent lawyer, has put one interpretation on Clause 8 of the June 16 statement while Mr. Jinnah puts another. Both are able lawyers and if they cannot agree on the interpretation of Clause 8 of the statement of June 16, why should the Congress be blamed ?"

While the Congress was opposed to parity in the Interim Government, he said, the Congress would not be opposed to the Muslim League operating a Government of their own, provided the League leader dropped his communalism and adopted nationalism.

" I want to make it clear that there is no possibility of a coalition between the Congress and the League as they have diametrically opposite aims. Any attempt at a coalition between these two will end in disaster. In England there was a coalition between Labour and the Conservatives during the war, but then they had a common objective, namely, defeat of Germany and Japan. But here, in India, Mr. Jinnah comes in with the avowed object of dividing India into Hindustan and Pakistan, whereas the Congress goes into work for a united federal India. How can these parties coalesce ? There is no common objective.

"I do not understand what new situation has arisen which entitles the Muslim League to withdraw its acceptance of the long-term plan. Mr. Jinnah complains of Pandit Nehru's Press interview in which he stated that the Congress has agreed to go into the Constituent Assembly and it is free to do what it likes inside the Assembly. Mr. Jinnah forgets that he himself in his speech at the League Council at Delhi in accepting the Cabinet Mission's plan said similar if not worse things. He said that the Muslim League was accepting the long-term plan because it contained the foundation of Pakistan and that the League hoped to build a full-fledged Pakistan on that foundation.

"In the very same speech he had said that the Congress had swallowed the sugar-coated pill of Pakistan. The League resolution accepting the long-term plan also continued similar expressions. Where then is the justification for Mr. Jinnah to complain against the Congress President?

Stating that the British Cabinet Mission's plans for long term settlement had been accepted by four parties—the Congress, the Muslim League, the Princes and the British Government—Sardar Patel said : "The Congress will never assume responsibility for breaking such a solemn undertaking. If the League chooses to withdraw from its obligations undertaken after full and mature consideration, it should not attempt to find excuses and try to throw the blame and responsibility for such a withdrawal on others. It must be prepared to face the full consequences of such a decision."

Sardar Patel then referred to Mr. Jinnah's "suddenly developed friendliness and tender regard" for the Scheduled Castes and said that it was Mr. Jinnah who persistently refused to agree to give them adequate representation in the Interim Government in preparation to their population. He insisted that the representation to the Scheduled Castes in the Interim Government should be restricted in the same manner as he objected to representation being accorded to other minorities such as the Parsis.

Referring to parity, Sardar Patel said that Mr. Jinnah had said that the Viceroy had assured him of parity in the Interim Government on the basis of 5 : 5 : 2. The Viceroy had already promptly denied this charge and still Mr. Jinnah repeated it. The Congress, he said, made no secret of the fact that it would not accept parity on any grounds nor allow any minority to go unrepresented in the Interim Government. He could not understand how Mr. Jinnah could believe that the Congress would ever accept the basis of parity which would relegate it to the status of a minor communal organization.

Mr. Jinnah's Reply to Patel's Suggestion

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah,* in an interview at Bombay on the 5th August, declared that the suggestion to refer the League's case to arbitration was unacceptable to him.

The proposal, Mr. Jinnah said, was made to "impress the ignorant public here and abroad that the Congress is reasonable and conciliatory." The Muslim demand for Pakistan was based on the right of self-determination and could not be a justiciable issue.

Mr. Jinnah said : "Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel in a recent speech on the Congress Working Committee's resolution at Delhi on June 26 and that of the A. I. C. C. at Bombay on July 7, to quote his words, said : "We accept full responsibility for the declaration. The Working Committee's resolution said clearly that it accepted the declaration of May 16. It still stood by it. Certainly it had the right to interpret the document." This is misleading. The document embodied four main proposals. First, the declaration which alone, he says, the Congress has accepted. The basic form and the grouping of the provinces in Paragraph 19 of the document and the formation of the Interim Government, have not been accepted by the Congress. And this is clear from the letter of the Congress President of June 25 whereby the Congress rejected the Statement of June 16 regarding the Interim Government and only accepted the Statement of May 16 with reservations and with their own interpretations. This being a conditional acceptance was in fact and in law a rejection of the Statement of May 16. The letter winds up by saying : 'We also gave our interpretation to some of the provisions of the statement. While adhering to our views we accepted your proposals and are prepared to work with a view to achieve our objective.' The resolution of the Working Committee proceeds to lay down that there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the Central Government and for fully ensuring the right of the provinces to act according to their choice in regard to grouping.

CONGRESS ATTITUDE CRITICISED

"Congress leaders have said at the A. I. C. C. that they have not accepted the long-term plan of the Cabinet Mission as it was and that they have rejected the tshort-term plan of June 16 and now Mr. Patel has the audacity to say that the League has gone back on its pledged word. To whom did we pledge our word and to what had we pledged our word ? One of the two major parties has not accepted the long-term plan and has rejected the short-term plan and this was pointed out by me immediately by the Press statement which I made at Delhi on June 27 and 29 and also by the resolution of the Muslim League Working Committee passed on June 26 accepting both. I had pointed out that the Congress had not accepted the long-term plan and rejected the Interim Government proposal. The Cabinet Mission scrapped the Interim Government proposal and had gone back on their word. We therefore decided to call a meeting of the All-India Muslim League Council at Bombay on July 26 and 28 to consider and to meet the new situation that had arisen, to which Pandit Nehru retorted that the Congress would create many more new situations. In the meantime, Pandit Nehru and other Congress leaders including Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel himself, made it clear in their speeches and public utterances in Bombay that the Congress had not accepted any of the terms of the

Statement of May 16 or committed themselves to anything. Further, on July 10 Pandit Nehru, the Congress President, made this crystal clear to a Press Conference: and the Assam Assembly, in accordance with the instructions of the Congress High Command, after having elected their representatives to the Constituent Assembly, gave them a definite mandate to have nothing to do with the "C" Group from the very start although there was a very strong opposition to this from the representatives of the minorities including the Muslims. But the resolution was carried by an overwhelming Congress majority. Further, at a public meeting in Delhi on July 22, Pandit Nehru reiterated that they were going to the Constituent Assembly to achieve their objective and to serve their purpose and if they failed, they would kill the Assembly.

"This was after the debate that took place in Parliament on July 18. This left no doubt that the Congress was going to the Constituent Assembly to achieve their objective as it has been repeatedly stated in the letters and the resolution of the Congress. It made its intentions clear that it was not bound by the grouping, nor were they confined strictly to the basic form of the document, and unequivocally asserted that they were free to enlarge the scope and powers of the Union and add as many subjects as they might wish to do to the Union Government.

POWERS OF THE CENTRE

"We know what the objective and purpose of the Congress is. The Congress believes that it has secured a declaration from the British Government of the complete independence of India outside the British Commonwealth of Nations and that this Constitution-making machinery should be turned into a sovereign body and that the only thing for them that now remains is to frame a constitution on the basis of strong, united Indian Federal Government with vital powers and subjects, such as defence, foreign affairs, communications, customs, finance, commerce, planning, industry and tariff and further with power to step in if the Constitution of any Provincial Government was not working according to their conception, thus reducing the provinces to a position which would be no better than that of municipalities or county councils.

"Mr. Patel says that no individual statement or expression of opinion could alter the solemn resolution and that the resolution itself is clear. But are we to disregard the pronouncement of the President of the Congress when he further clarifies a resolution. Then what importance are we to attach to the individual pronouncements like Mr. Patel's?

"Mr. Patel says: "The League and the Congress pull in the opposite directions. One wants to divide India into Pakistan and Hindustan while the other yearns for a united India." "It was clear", Mr. Patel adds, "that the two have no common meeting ground, that a coalition between the Congress and the League was impossible for the organisations were holding views which were diametrically opposed to each other." But when we demand Pakistan and the division of India into Hindustan and Pakistan, our scheme gives freedom and independence to both the major nations—the Hindus and the Muslims—whereas the Congress and Mr. Patel are adamant and wish to establish a united India with a strong federal Central Government which means that 100 million Muslims are to be brought under the yoke of Hindu majority rule and it means freedom only for the Hindus and slavery for Muslims under Hindu Raj. I echo: How can there be a common meeting ground on this basis for which, I have no doubt, many Caste-Hindus passionately yearn and Mr. Patel dreams?

"Having declared that we stand poles asunder, Mr. Patel advises me that I should change my approach and cease to be a communalist and become a nationalist—I suppose he means a Congress Nationalist—and accept that the Congress represents all India, on the imaginary footing that India was one country and one nation, whereas the facts are that the Congress is nothing but a Caste-Hindu organisation. But his advice that I should become a nationalist and cease to be a communalist means nothing except that I should bury the Pakistan demand, disown the Muslim nation and appear before him in sack-cloth and ashes and after that, when we have entirely thrown ourselves at their mercy, we can have as many seats in the proposed executive as we like, as their creatures.

"Mr. Patel is speaking in terms of contradication. On the one hand, he says that there is no meeting ground and that Coalition is impossible as we are poles apart. But on the other hand he says that the Congress had gone to my doors a hundred times—this of course is not true—and that I have never deigned to go to them. The truth is that three times in the course of the last eight years, Mr. Gandhi came to me with a view to persuade me to accept the Congress demand, which I could not. Does Mr. Patel want me to go to the Congress to persuade them to accept the Pakistan demand of the Muslims which he characterised in his speech as a "deflated cycle tube"? Last time when Mr. Gandhi came to me, he came only in his individual capacity, to understand what the Pakistan demand meant and I spent three weeks with him to convert him, but I failed.

TALKS WITH PANDIT NEHRU RECALLED

"This sort of talk is really intended to poison the mind of the Hindus and Mr. Patel is only suffering from an inferiority-complex. At Simla, when it was arranged that Mr. Nehru and I should meet, I asked him where we could meet and he himself said, "I shall go over to you." When we met on May 11 during the conference time, I pleaded before him for one and half hours and appealed to him to come to a settlement on the basis of Pakistan, but he was adamant. Before his parting with me, I cautioned him that he should not to be poisoned by taunts that he had come to my place and that I was not willing to go to his place. The place really does not matter and it is so petty to trot this out in the manner in which Mr. Patel has done.

"I told Pandit Nehru that, if after consulting his colleagues, he wished to discuss the matter on the basis of Pakistan and gave me an appointment, I would gladly go to his place or anybody else's place that he might wish. Mr. Patel makes a passionate appeal. After having made it clear that there was no meeting ground, he invites me to sit with the Congress as 'brothers' and join them to break the statement of the Mission. Well, we have already torn up the statement of May 16. He doubts our desire for freedom when he says that we should join hands with the Congress if we are keen upon freedom. And, finally, he says: "When we have sat as brothers and if there is no agreement possible, let the matter be referred to arbitration and let us abide by the award of the Arbitrator."

SELF-DETERMINATION ISSUE

"This proposal is made again to impress the ignorant public here and abroad that the Congres is so reasonable and so conciliatory, but that the Muslim League is intransigent. Mr. Patel knows perfectly well and I have pointed out more than once that the demand for Pakistan is based on the right of self-determination of Muslims, which is their birthright and is not and cannot be a justiciable issue on principle alone. It is absurd to say that this matter particularly should be referred to arbitration. Even on practical grounds, who will select the arbitrators and who will enforce their award? No country can run its Government unless its Constitution is framed by the willing consent of the people concerned. For this very reason the Congress and the Muslim League had demanded Constituent Assemblies of the representatives of the people to frame the Constitution.

"Is Mr. Patel really serious? Then, why talk of the Constituent Assembly and why not refer the whole matter regarding the entire framing of the Constitution to the arbitration of a few? Therefore, the proposal of arbitration is ludicrous. Mr. Patel knows better than anybody else that it could not be accepted, both on grounds of principle and as practical proposition.

"Mr. Patel has now become the champion of the British whom he says I have traduced and complains that I have abused the Congress. He does not specify what are those abuses. I have certainly attacked and criticised the Congress and charged them with disrupting the Muslims and have exposed their false claim that they represent all-India, including the Muslims, which certainly is not true. All my attacks and criticism have been in self-defence against the most aggressive and arrogant attitude of the Congress. The Congress has made every effort to mislead the people here and abroad aided with its vast and powerful Press and organisation and has accused me and the Muslim League that we are tools in the hands of British imperialism. Not a day passes when the Congress Press does not abuse the League and myself.

"There are many inaccuracies in Mr. Patel's statement and they are merely intended as propaganda for the Congress and to mislead the people abroad by passing off that theirs was a conciliatory attitude whereas the League was intransigent."

Congress Working Committee's Resolution

The Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution at Wardha on the 10th August 1946 making it clear that while the Congress did not approve of all the proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, it accepted the scheme in its entirety as noted in the Committee's statement of June 26.

The Committee regretted to note that the Council of the All-India Muslim League revising its previous decision, has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly, and appealed for the co-operation of all parties for the solution of India's many problems. The resolution declared that the Congress stood by its previous decision and proposed to proceed with the work of the Constituent Assembly. (For text of resolution see p. 105).

Mr. Jinnah on the Congress Resolution

"The latest resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed at Wardha on August 10 does not carry us anywhere, because it is only a repetition of the stand taken by them from the very beginning only put in a different language and phraseology," said Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* in a statement issued from Bombay on the 12th **August 1946.** The following is the full text of the statement :—

"The entire scheme of the British Cabinet Mission consisted of the long-term plan statement of May 16 and May 25 and the short-term proposal of setting up the Interim Government and these two formed integral parts of the whole scheme and were interdependent and indivisible. The Muslim League accepted both whereas the Congress rejected the Interim Government proposal of June 16th and accepted the statement of May 16th conditionally with reservations and their own interpretations.

"The Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy scrapped the Interim Government proposal of June 16th and treated the Congress decision communicated to them on the 25th and 26th of June wrongly as acceptance. The so-called acceptance was in fact a rejection.

"After that, the Viceroy declined to postpone the elections of the Constituent Assembly on the plea that arrangements for it had gone far too ahead. Although the arrangements with regard to the Interim Government were complete and the resignations of the then members of the Executive Council were held by him and according to the statement of June 16th the Interim Government was to be set up on or about June 26th, yet it was scrapped. After this, the Muslim League was free to take such decision as they thought proper as the entire basis of the scheme had fallen through. It was only the Council of the All-India Mualim League that could finally have decided our attitude and in these circumstances, we summoned the Council of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay on July 27-29 and they decided to withdraw our acceptance formally.

"In the meantime we decided to contest the elections to the Constituent Assembly in order to prevent undesirable people getting in as Muslim representatives and we captured 95 per cent Muslim seats. Meanwhile, before the Council of the League had met, Congress leaders, including the President in their speeches at the All-India Congress Committee meeting on July 6 and 7 made their pronouncements which created grave apprehensions in the League circles and were expressed by Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, in his statement from Hyderabad on July 13. notably with regard to the pronouncement of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on July 10 at a Press Conference, which left no doubt as to the intentions of the Congress. Both these statements were broadcast in the Press by News Agencies.

"The debate in the Parliament which took place on July 18 showed that the British Government approved of the scrapping of the Interim Government by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy and paid no attention whatever to the new situation that had arisen, not only by pronouncements and clarifications and interpretations given by the Congress leaders which were published throughout the country, but also by the fact that the Assam Assembly, while electing the Assam representatives to the Constituent Assembly, had under the instructions of the Congress High Command passed a resolution giving a mandate not only to the representatives of the Mussalmans elected by a separate bloc of Muslim members to have nothing to do with the C Group from the very start. This clearly repudiated one of the fundamental terms of the statement of May 16 and this is an instance of how the majority acted, although it is highly doubtful whether the Assam Assembly was competent to give such a mandate to the representatives of the Constituent Assembly.

"The latest resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed at Wardha on August 10 does not carry us anywhere, because it is only a repetition of the Congress stand taken by them from the very beginning, only put in a different language and phraseology. This is what they say with regard to their decision on the long-term plan.

"The Committee further noted that criticisms have been advanced on behalf of the Muslim League to the effect that Congress acceptance of the proposals contained in the statement of May 16 was conditional. The Committee wish to make it clear that while they did not approve of all the proposals contained in this statement, they accepted the scheme in its entirety."

"The resolution further continues: "They interpreted it so as to resolve the inconsistency contained in it and fill the omissions in accordance with the principle laid down in that statement."

"Therefore, to start with, they are free to resolve the inconsistency and fill in the omissions. How can that be in accordance with the principle laid down in that statement? What is the inconsistency and what are the omissions?

"The resolution proceeds further and says: 'They hold that Provincial Autonomy is a basic provision and each province has the right to decide whether to form or join a Group or not.' Therefore they maintain that it is open to the Congress to decide whether any particular province could join the Group or not. But they go on to say: 'The question of interpretations will be decided by the procedure laid down in the Statement itself and the Congress will advise its representatives to the Constituent Assembly to function accordingly.' Who will decide this question of interpretations and by what procedure and what is the procedure laid down in the Statement for the purpose of interpreting the statement or any clause thereof except by the brute majority?

"The resolution then goes on further: 'The Committee have emphasised the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly, that is, the right to function and draw up the constitution for India without the interference of any external power or authority, but the Assembly will naturally function within the internal limitations which are inherent in its task and will further seek the largest measure of co-operation in drawing up the constitution of free India, allowing the greatest measure of freedom and protection for all just claims and interests.' Therefore, it is obvious that they still hold that this constitution-making machinery is a sovereign Constituent Assembly but they resent any interference of any external power and authority. Whoever has suggested it and where has it been suggested? The question is how this Assembly will function and they make it clear that it will do so within the internal limitations which are inherent in its task. What are the internal limitations in the Statement of May 16 which could not be overruled by a sovereign Constituent Assembly? If any decisions are taken by this Assembly which are repugnant, *ultra vires* or incompetent for the Assembly to adopt, what is the check provided for it either internally or externally except again the brute majority in the Assembly?

"They conclude by saying that the resolution of the Working Committee passed on June 26 and confirmed by the A. I. C. C. 'must stand and they propose to proceed accordingly with their work in the Constituent Assembly.' Therefore, it is quite clear that there is no change on the part of the Congress except the starting expression that they had accepted the scheme in its entirety, which is immediately contradicted by what follows in the resolution and they have reiterated their repudiation of the grouping and emphasised once more the sovereign character of the Constituent Assembly, which can only mean that it will not be bound by anything laid down in the Statement of May 16 and would be free to decide every question by majority.

"I need not deal with the rest of the resolution which is nothing but verbiage and an appeal to the League to join the battle of India's independence. But there is no doubt left as to India's independence now because the Statement of May 16, at any rate, makes it clear on the part of the British and Mr. Patel, in his recent speech in Bombay, said there was no need any longer to fight the British and that the only revolution that was needed was internal revolution. With whom does the Congress ask us to join hands and for what purpose?

"I am afraid the situation remains as it was and we are where we were."

Pt. Nehru Accepts Viceroy's Invitation

The following communique was issued from the Viceroy's House, New Delhi on the 12th August 1946:—

"His Excellency the Viceroy, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, has invited the President of the Congress to make proposals for the immediate formation of an Interim Government, and the President of the Congress has accepted the invitation. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will shortly visit New Delhi to discuss his proposals with his Excellency the Viceroy."

Nehru's Invitation to Jinnah

The Congress President wrote on the 13th August to the League President informing of the Viceroy's invitation to him to form an Interim Government and inviting Mr. Jinnah's co-operaion in the fulfilment of the task he (Pt. Nehru) has undertaken. The letter was couched in language that was courteous and friendly and Pandit Nehru offered to meet Mr. Jinnah when and where the latter chose.

In a statement issued earlier, Pandit Nehru said: "As has been announced by the Viceroy, I have been invited by him in the capacity as President of the Congress, to make proposals for the immediate formation of an Interim Government. In consultation with my colleagues, I have accepted this invitation. It is our desire to have as representative a Provisional National Government, as early as possible, so that we might unitedly face the great problems that confront the country and lead India rapidly to full Independence. We would welcome the co-operation of the League in forming a Coalition Government and I am therefore writing to Mr. Jinnah on this subject."

Text of the Nehru-Jinnah Correspondence

The meeting between Pandit Nehru and Mr. Jinnah was the outcome of the following correspondence which passed between them and which was released by mutual consent:—

Pandit Nehru writing from Wardha on August 13, says: "Dear Mr. Jinnah: As you know, the Viceroy has invited me, in my capacity as President of the Congress, to make proposals for the immediate formation of an Interim Government. I have accepted this invitation. I feel that my first step should be to approach you and seek your co-operation in the formation of a coalition provisional Government. It is naturally our desire to have as representative a Government as possible. Should you wish to discuss this matter further with me before coming to a decision, I shall gladly see you in Bombay or wherever you may be. I am leaving Wardha on the 14th and will reach Bombay on the 15th August forenoon. Probably I shall leave Bombay for Delhi on the morning of August 17."

Mr. Jinnah's reply, dated Bombay Aug. 15, reads: "Dear Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, I have received your letter dated the 13th which was delivered to me yesterday by hand.

"I know nothing as to what has transpired between the Viceroy and you; nor have I any idea of what arrangement has been arrived at between you two, except what you say in your letter that the Viceroy has invited you, in your capacity as the President of the Congress, to make proposals for the immediate formation of the Interim Government and that you have accepted the invitation.

"If this means that the Viceroy has commissioned you to form the Executive Council of the Governor-General and has already agreed to accept and act upon your advice and proceed to constitute his Executive accordingly, it is not possible for me to accept such a position on that basis.

"However, if you care to meet me on behalf of the Congress to settle the Hindu-Muslim question and resolve the serious deadlock, I shall be glad to see you today at 6 p.m.

"The substance of your letter, unfortunately, has already appeared in the Press even before I received it. May I therefore request you to release this letter of mine also to the Press?"

Pandit Nehru answering the above letter immediately wrote: "Dear Mr. Jinnah: Thank you for your letter of today's date which was delivered to me at about 1 p. m. Nothing has transpired between me and the Viceroy except what has already been published.

"There is no arrangement other than what is contained in his brief offer and our acceptance. That offer, made by the Viceroy with the concurrence of the British Government, is for us to make proposals for the formation immediately of an Interim Government. The Executive Council of the Governor-General has not been mentioned as such.

"It is understood, as stated in the published correspondence between the Congress President and the Viceroy, that the Interim Government will have the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day to day administration of this country.

"Since this brief offer was made and we accepted it, I have had no opportunity to meet the Viceroy or discuss the matter with him more fully. I hope to do so within the next two or three days. It was our wish, however, that I might approach you first and invite your co-operation. We are naturally anxious to form a Government which will be as representative as possible in order to deal with the urgent problems facing this country.

"In your letter you state that you are unable to accept the position as it appears to you. I regret this. Perhaps on fuller consideration of the position you would be agreeable to reconsider your decision. If so, we would welcome it. For this purpose I shall gladly see you if you so desire.

"As regards the general Hindu-Muslim question, we are always prepared to discuss this and try to find a way out. At present we are immediately concerned with the formation of the provisional Government and circumstances demand that early steps should be taken in regard to it. We hope that a coalition provisional Government will itself help in the consideration and solution of our problems.

"While I am willing to discuss the larger question with you, I have no new suggestions to make. Perhaps you may be able to suggest a new approach. I am prepared to come to your place at 6 p.m. this evening or, if it is more convenient to you, some time tomorrow. I am leaving Bombay on the 17th morning.

"My letter to you was not sent to the Press. I made a brief statement to the Press, however, in view of the repeated questions put to me by newspapermen and in order to prevent misconceptions. If you so desire you can release all this correspondence to the Press.

Nehru on Talks with Jinnah

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Indian National Congress, announced at a Press Conference at Bombay on the 16th August 1946 that the Muslim League President, Mr. Jinnah, had declined to offer his Party's co-operation to the Congress in the formation of an immediate Provisional National Government. Pandit Nehru said: "Co-operation in the formation of the Provisional Government is being offered to the Congress by all elements excepting the Muslim League for the moment. However, in the circumstances, it is obvious that we cannot stand still because of this unfortunate lack of co-operation from the Muslim League. So far as we are concerned, the door of co-operation will always be open and we shall, in whatever we may do, be keeping in view this larger view-point. We shall always look for the larger measure of co-operation."

Pandit Nehru made it clear that the Congress would go ahead with the formation of the Provisional Government subject, of course, to other conditions being satisfactory after his interview with the Viceroy on the next day.

Pandit Nehru's Press conference lasted 60 minutes and he dealt with only the outstanding questions. He made it clear at the outset that he would not like to go into the details but would frankly take the public into his confidence as events have progressed so far.

Pandit Nehru said: "A few days ago I received a communication from the Viceroy, when I was at Wardha, which stated that, in concurrence with the British Government, he, the Viceroy, propose to ask me, as President of the Congress, to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government. It is fairly a simple communication and there is nothing more or less than what I have stated. What that communication implies, it is for you to draw your own conclusions.

"The Congress Working Committee decided to inform the Viceroy that I would be prepared to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government. I had no other communication with the Viceroy in regard to this matter, apart from the one mentioned above.

"The position, today, is somewhat vague, though undoubtedly, the announcements made on behalf of the Viceroy and on our behalf, do make a considerable advance. When I saw the Viceroy last, at Delhi, there was no talk, nor mention of the Interim Government. Some people imagine that there was some kind of secret understanding between the Congress and the Viceroy in regard to this matter, but I say there is nothing of the kind."

NEW KIND OF APPROACH BY VICEROY

Pandit Nehru added: "The present offer to the Congress to form the Interim Government does make a difference. The Viceroy has made a new kind of approach. There is a psychological difference. Unlike on previous occasions, we are now asked to form the entire Government, no doubt with the co-operation of others, but taking the responsibility for it. Now it is not a question of individuals being picked and chosen by an external authority. May be, all this ends in our being caught in a trap ; may be, that it leads us much further in the direction we want to go. We would eliminate all the obstructions in our way. But, in any case, we have to be very wary.

"Meanwhile, we thought it desirable that we should do our utmost to gain the co-operation of all, and, more especially, the League in forming the Government. There are obviously considerable differences in outlook, approach and objectives between the Congress and the Muslim League. It would have been rather futile to imagine that all those differences would suddenly vanish. Nevertheless, we did hope that, our differences apart, we might still be able to co-operate and, possibly, the process of co-operation might help in resolving those differences."

Pandit Nehru then referred to the correspondence exchanged between him and Mr. Jinnah yesterday and said: "We had, as usual, a friendly talk. Mr. Jinnah put forward the Muslim League's case which everyone is well acquainted with. In brief, he criticised both the so-called long-term and short-term plans. Mr. Jinnah felt that the latest resolution of the Congress Working Committee did not differ from the previous stand taken by the Congress. Perhaps he was right."

Pandit Nehru regretted that his meeting with Mr. Jinnah yesterday did not bring the Congress and the Muslim League politically nearer to one another. "For the present I can say nothing more except that I am going to Delhi to-morrow. I shall meet the Viceroy and we shall discuss the question of the formation of the Interim Government further. The fact that we have agreed to make proposals does obviously put certain responsibilities on us. It takes us many steps further. We have taken this decision with the full sense of responsibility and not in any light-hearted manner, because, obviously, all manner of consequences may follow.

"I would like you to realise that there are possibly many hurdles still and not to imagine, as some do, that there is no further difficulty left about the formation of the Provisional Government. It may well be formed or there may still be some obstruction or difficulty."

CONGRESS TO FORM A "FREE GOVERNMENT"

Pandit Nehru made it clear in answer to a question, that the Congress had accepted the Viceroy's offer to form the Interim Government which would not merely be the Executive Council, but a Free Government.

Pandit Nehru said: "Strictly, legally speaking, there will be no change as regards the Viceroy's position, but, in practice, I trust, he will be a kind of constitutional head. But, if unfortunately, the Viceroy exercised his veto, it would lead to trouble. In fact, it cannot be exercised. If he does, it would have major consequences."

Answering a question, Pandit Nehru said that the question of certification of any Bill by the Viceroy would not arise inasmuch as there cannot be a conflict between the Government and the Assembly. "I cannot conceive of such a conflict", he said, "because any Provisional Government must carry the Central Assembly with it. If it does not, that Goverment must go."

Pandit Nehru continued: "In fact the Provisional Government should function as though it was responsible to the Central Assembly, such as it is. It is obvious that the whole Provisional Government will be a different set-up, psychologically, and will approach both domestic and international problems from a different point of view. While so doing, it is conceivable that it may come into conflict with British authority in England or elsewhere. At present, one cannot say anything specific in regard to this matter."

Asked if the Congress formed the Interim Government without the Muslim League's co-operation and the League started some kind of direct action, would it not lead to the Congress being used to put down the League, Pandit Nehru said, "If the League starts some kind of direct action, obviously, Government will face that direct action—either come to terms with it or oppose it. There is no other course. If the Government is strong, direct action goes under, but if the Government is weak, the Government will go under."

INTERIM GOVT. AND THE STATES

Pandit Nehru was then asked what would be the attitude of the Provisional Government towards Indian States. He said: "The States, as such, do not come within the scope of the Provisional Government except in regard to many common problems between the States and the rest of India. But obviously, such a Government, apart from the common problems, will be intensely interested in the formation of democratic Governments in the States and it will try to further that end."

Pandit Nehru continued: "The decision of the Congress Working Committee to form the Interim Government was a vital decision and yet, perhaps, an inevitable decision in the sense that it follows a certain chain of happenings From the Congress point of view, it was certainly a novel step. That step could not be taken normally without previous reference to the All-India Congress Committee and in any event that reference will have to be made and the final decision will rest with that Committee. At the same time, we felt that it would not be right for us to postpone action, in view of various developments and happenings both in this country and abroad."

RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS EXECUTIVE

The Congress decision to agree to form the Interim Government involves many other consequences, internally, for the Congress. We have given some thought to this but we have not decided upon any definite line of action, since we are not sure whether the acceptance of the Viceroy's offer would lead to something final or not. I might tell you that, even now, we have not finally decided about the details of the proposals we have to make to the Viceroy. Since the Congress joining the Provisional Government is some thing entirely new, both for the Congress and the country, we have to consider what relations our Executive should bear to that Government and whether any member of the Executive could belong to that Government. The Working Committee has come to certain conclusions in regard to these matters.

Pandit Nehru emphasising the importance of maintaining the revolutionary character of the Congress organisation, said, "The Working Committee attaches the greatest importance to the internal organisation of the Congress, because it feels that whatever the future may hold for us, the real sanction behind us is the Congress organisation. Therefore, we must do our utmost not only to keep it going, but to strengthen it, widen it, make it more disciplined and ready for action, when action may be necessary. Therefore, in considering all these governmental affairs, we have to think all the time of the effect of each such development on the Congress organisation and how we should adapt that organisation to these changing circumstances, so that it may not come into conflict, and yet, the most important thing of all, it should retain its revolutionary outlook. Obviously, some kind of change at the top by itself does not mean much. It may be the precursor of other changes, big and small. It is because we look upon the Viceroy's offer from that point of view that we thought in terms of accepting the Viceroy's offer to form the Interim Government. Big changes have to come later. The formation of the Provisional Government and the convening of the Constituent Assembly are by themselves only initial steps in a certain process. If we think that those steps is in the right direction, then we take them. But, if we think that they may come in our way, we must avoid them. We have now come to the conclusion that these two steps, namely the convening of the Constituent Assembly and the formation of the Interim Government, lead us and help us to proceed in the right direction, which will bring about fundamental changes in India. It is because of this, that we have decided to go into the Constituent Assembly as well as, if other things are satisfactory, to form the Provisional Government."

DOOR FOR CO-OPERATION KEPT OPEN

Pandit Nehru continued, "Naturally when one takes such a step, one wishes for the largest measure of co-operation possible. In spite of all that had happened during the last three or four weeks—many statements, some of them violent and threatening violent action against the Congress—we felt it our duty to make an earnest effort to get that co-operation, not only from the Muslim League, but from others too. That co-operation is being offered to us by almost every group or community in India except, I regret, for the moment, the Muslim League. In the circumstances, however, it is obvious that we cannot stand still because of this unfortunate lack of co-operation from the Muslim League. So far as we are concerned that door of co-operation will always be open. We shall, whatever we may do, always be keeping in view this larger view-point and proceed with the largest measure of co-operation."

Mr. Jinnah Attacks Congress

"Pandit Jawharlal Nehru would have been nearer the truth if, instead of saying that there was lack of co-operation from the Muslim League, he had said that the Muslim League was not prepared to surrender; and it would have been still more true if, instead of saying that the Congress door of co-operation was still open, he had said that the Congress door was open to the Muslim League for abject surrender", said Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, in a statement from Bombay on the 18th August 1946.

Mr. Jinnah added : "It has been made very clear once more and it has been admitted by Pandit Nehru in his recent Press Conference that the Congress has not accepted the long-term plan of May 16 and there is no doubt that they rejected the short-term final proposal of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy dated June 16 whereupon that part of the scheme was scrapped by the Viceroy.

"In his Press Conference Pandit Nehru admitted that there was no difference between the decision of the Congress Working Committee taken at Wardha on August 10 and the resolution of the A. I. C. C. of July 7 passed at Bombay ratifying the earlier decision of the Working Committee at Delhi on June 25 and 26. So the matter stands as it was after the original decision of the Congress Working Committee at Delhi. And therefore, now admittedly, the Congress has not accepted the long-term plan nor the short-term proposal, whereas the Muslim League did accept both and had finally to withdraw their acceptance at the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League Council on July 29.

"What remains now is the new situation created by the communique issued by the Viceroy inviting the Congress to make their proposals for the Interim Government. Our position, from the very beginning, has been that the long-term settlement and the Interim Government must go together and that they constitute one whole indivisible scheme and the one cannot be separated from the other and that was what the Mission did according to their statements of May 16 and of June 16. We were not satisfied with all the proposals of the scheme and they were more against the League stand than against the Congress. Nevertheless, we accepted them but the Congress rejected them. But now, as I have already said, I don't know as to what is going on between the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress. In the course of our interview on August 15, Pandit Nehru declined to discuss the long-term settlement. He made it clear to me that they were invited by the Viceroy to make their proposals for the Interim Government and he thought that he would like to see me before the Congress submitted their proposals to the Viceroy.

PANDIT NEHRU'S OFFER

"The proposals which he made were that the Congress would form the Cabinet and they were prepared to give 5 seats out of 14 to the Muslim League and the remaining 9 would be filled by the Congress nominees, including one Muslim of their choice; that this Cabinet would be responsible only to the present Central Legislative Assembly where, I may point out, the Congress has got at least 3 votes as against one of the Muslim League; and further that the Viceroy would be the constitutional Governor-General and must not exercise his veto, nor should any other external authority interfere with this Cabinet. It was no that he was forming the Executive Council of the Governor-General under the framework of the present constitution but the Government so formed would be a 'Provisional National Government'. This was the plan he disclosed to me and it was obvious that I could not possibly accept such a proposal because after that there would remain nothing to talk about the Muslim demand and our goal of Pakistan.

"From what he has announced in his Press Conference, I gather that his postion is more or less the same. In his Press Conference, which was very long drawn, he has said many things. But I do not propose to controvert all the details and shall deal only with the main points.

"He is reported to have said that almost all others were willing to co-operate with the Congress except the Muslim League. Who are the others ? The Sikhs have changed four times already and the fifth time it may be our good luck and they may become our friends. Even their last decision, as Master Tara Singh explained, was not unanimous and he, the leader of the Akali Party, was himself opposed to it, but it was a compromise for the particular purpose of wrecking the Group 'B' with the help of the Congress which the latter has promised. The Scheduled Castes, who, I am sorry to say, have been let down by the Viceroy, are opposed to the Congress and the Christian organisation is certainly not with the Congress nor are the Anglo-Indians or the Parsis. It was only the Caste Hindu Fascist Congress and their few individual henchmen of other communities who want to be installed in power and authority of the Government of India to dominate and rule over the Mussalmans and other minority communities of India with the aid of British bayonets. When he was asked if the Muslim League resorted to direct action when power is handed over to the Congress what would be the attitude of the Congress, Pandit Nehru replied making it clear that they would crush the Muslim League or, if they fail, the Government would go down. When he says that the League will be crushed if we resort to direct action, he talks with confidence, for he relies upon the shelter and support of the baton of Field Marshal Wavel.

"It cannot be said with any qualms of conscience that the minority has placed a veto on the advance of the majority community. For we had accepted the considered final proposals of the Mission and the Viceroy both with regard to long-term and the Interim Government—although they were not quite satisfactory to us—and it is the Congress that has rejected them both by their veto and intransigent attitude. Now the question is whether this majority is going to be installed in power on its own terms, by the British Government to rule the Mussalmans and the minorities with the help of British blood and treasure? It is inconceivable that Mr. Attlee, the Prime Minister, could have ever meant this—the forcing of any such arrangement upon the Muslims and others which must and would result in unprecedented and most dangerous and disastrous consequences.

"In his Press Conference, Pandit Nehru has not failed to give his oft-repeated threat even while he is seeking our 'co-operation'. He says, 'They (Congress) must do their utmost not only to keep the Congress organisation going but must strengthen it, widen it and make it more disciplined and ready for action when action might be necessary. They would have to consider how the organisation should adapt itself to the changing circumstances so that it might not come in conflict and that at the same time retain its revolutionary outlook."

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

"He has again repeated that they were going to the Constituent Assembly to achieve their objective and that it was only a step in that direction and if anything came in their way they will abandon it. He considers that the swift limb of the Congress should not be shackled to the halt asd the lame, by which latter expression, I presume he means the Muslim League. Why then does the swift limb want to make alliance with the British Imperialism and depend upon British bayonets? Is it to enable them to crush the Mulim League? Why cannot they stand on their own?

"Having laid down the policy of his future Government of India as regards the Muslim League, Pandit Nehru indulges further in declarations of his policy and formulates principles as to how they will proceed with regard to the Indian States and how they will be treated and the policy of his Government of India with regard to other countries and the general international and foreign relations without any reference to the Muslim League.

"This is the tenor, tone and temper of the pronouncement of Pandit Jawaharlal displayed in the course of his Press Conference, immediately after his interview with me when he came to seek my co-operation. He says our talk did not bring the Congress and the Muslim League any nearer one another. How can it"?

Nehru Answers Jinnah's Charges

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Congress President, denies in a Press statement issued from New Delhi on the 21st. Augusi 1946 that he declined to discuss the long-term settlement with Mr. M. A. Jinnah during his recent meeting with the League President. Pandit Nehru adds: "I said nothing about crushing the Muslim League or any one else. Our policy has not been and will not be to threaten or crush any one but rather to win him over if we can." The following is the text of the Congress President's statement:

"In the course of a statement to the Press, Mr. Jinnah has referred to my interview with him and to my subsequent Press Conference in Bombay. I am reluctant to enter into any controversy and I would not have said anything further on this subject. But some misapprehension has arisen because of certain remarks made by Mr. Jinnah and I feel that I should say something to clear it. Mr. Jinnah is perfectly entitled to draw his inferences from what I may have said though I think some of his inferences are not justified. It is possible also that subsequent recollection of a long talk may not be strictly accurate even as to facts. The Congress position has been fully clarified in the Working Committee's recent resolution and I cannot add to it or vary it in any way. The brief correspondence that Mr. Jinnah and I exchanged with each other in Bombay soon after the Working Committee resolution is also there explaining both our respective positions, I would suggest to any one interested to refer to the language of these documents for clarification if that is needed.

"Mr. Jinnah says that I declined to discuss with him the long-term settlement. This statement has surprised me and I can only say that Mr. Jinnah's memory is at fault. I could not and would not decline to discuss anything with him. As a matter of fact I remember to have discussed the long-term settlement and the Constituent Assembly with him during our talk. This inevitably followed with reference to the Working Committee resolution.

"As for the Interim Government being responsible to the Central Legislative Assembly, I stated that in effect it could not go against the wishes of that Assembly. I was asked a question in the Press Conference about clarification, I replied that I could not imagine that such a contingency could arise because the Government would have to function in harmony with the Central Assembly.

"I said nothing about the Muslim League or any one else. Our policy has not been and will not be to threaten or crush any one but rather to win him over if we can. I was asked what would happen if there was direct action against the Government. I replied that wherever there is such direct action there can be only two results, either the success or partial success of that action which means the Government being swept away or coming to terms with it, or the direct action fails.

"Mr. Jinnah refers to the use of British bayonets. May I repeat again what we have said frequently that we want the British armed forces to be removed from India as soon as possible. The sooner they go the happier we shall be because we do not wish to think in terms of bayonets and certainly not in terms of British bayonets, I am sure that when British armed might is removed from India, it will be easier for all of us to face the realities in India and arrive at mutually advantageous agreements. Whatever conflict or discord there might unfortunately be to-day, it is certain that it will end some time or other and all the Indian people pull together to our destined goal of a free, Independent and prosperous India."

Announcement of Interim Government Personnel

The following communique was issued from New Delhi on the 24th August 1946 :—

His Majesty the King has accepted the resignation of the present members of the Governor-General's Executive Council. His Majesty has been pleased to appoint the following :—

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Mr. Asaf Ali
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose
Dr. John Matthai
Sardar Baldev Singh
Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan
Mr. Jagjivan Ram
Syed Ali Zahir
Mr. Coverji Hormusji Bhaba

Two more Muslim members will be appointed later.

The Interim Government will take office on September 2.

Viceroy's Broadcast on the New Government

"I shall implement fully His Majesty's Government's policy of giving the new Government the maximum freedom in the day-to-day administration of the country," said the Viceroy, *Lord Wavell*, broadcasting from Delhi Station of the All-India Radio on the 24th August 1946. His Excellency made it clear that the offer made to the Muslim League was still open. The Viceroy said :

You will have heard the announcement of the names of the members of the new Interim Government which will come into office very shortly. You will, I am sure, all realise that a very momentous step forward has been taken on India's road to freedom. Some of you who listen to me, may feel, however, that the step should not have been taken in this way or at this time. It is to these that I want principally to address myself to-night.

You who are opposed to the formation of the new Government, are not, I assume, opposed to the main policy of His Majesty's Government, namely, to fulfil their pledges by making India free to follow her destiny. You will also, I think, all agree that we need at once a Government of Indians, as representative as possible, of political opinion in the country. This is what I set out to secure.

But though five seats out of 14 were offered to the Muslim League, though assurances were given that the scheme of constitution-making would be worked in accordance with the procedure laid down and though the new Interim Government is to operate under the existing Constitution, it has not been possible at present to secure a coalition. No one could be sorrier about the failure than I am. No one could be more sure that it is a Coalition Government in which both the main parties are represented that is needed at this moment in the interest of all parties and communities in India. This is the view, which I know the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and his colleagues hold as strongly as I do. His efforts, like mine, will still be directed towards persuading the League to join the Government.

OFFER STILL OPEN TO LEAGUE

Let me state clearly that the offer which has been made is still open to the Muslim League. They can propose to me five names for places in the Government of 14, of which six will be representatives of the minorities. Provided these names are acceptable to me and approved by His Majesty, they will be included in the Government, which will at once be re-formed. The Muslim League need have no fear of being out-voted on any essential issue. A Coalition Government can only exist and function on the condition that both main parties to it are satisfied. I will see that the most important portfolios are equitably shared. I sincerely trust that the League will re-consider their policy and decide to participate in the Government.

Meanwhile, however, the administration of India has to go on, and there are large issues which must be decided. I am glad that the representatives of a very large body of political opinion in the country will be my colleagues in carrying on the Government. I welcome them to my Council. I am also glad that the Sikhs have now decided to participate in the Constituent Assembly and in the Interim Government. I have no doubt that their decision is a wise one.

As I have already made clear, I shall implement fully His Majesty's Government's policy of giving the new Government the maximum freedom in the day-to-day administration of the country. In the field of Provincial Autonomy, of course, my new Government will not have any power or, indeed, any desire to intervene.

CALCUTTA RIOTS DEPLORED

The recent terrible occurrences in Calcutta have been a sobering reminder that a much greater measure of toleration is essential if India is to survive the transition to freedom. I appeal not only to the sober citizens, but also to the young and discontended to recognise that no conceivable good either to themselves or their community or to India can come from violent words or from violent deeds. It is essential that in all Provinces, law and order is maintained, and the protection of the ordinary peaceable citizen is assured with a firm but impartial hand and that no community is oppressed. The Army had to be called in at Calcutta to restore order and rightly so. But I must remind you that to suppress civil disturbances is not the normal duty of the Army, but that of the Provincial Government. The use of the Army is the last recourse only. A general recognition of this basic principle is essential both from the point of view of the civil population and of the Army itself.

I have heard much praise of the discipline and efficiency of the troops employed in Calcutta, and I will here add my own tribute of admiration to my own service for their behaviour in a duty which is the most exacting and unpleasant on which troops can be employed.

The War Member in the Indian Government will be an Indian, and this is a change which both the Commander-in-Chief and I warmly welcome. But the constitutional position of the armed forces is in no way changed. They still owe allegiance in accordance with their oath to the King-Emperor, to whom and Parliament I am still responsible.

In spite of all immediate appearances, I believe there is yet a chance of agreement between the two principal parties. I am quite sure that there is a very large body of opinion in both parties and of non-party men who would welcome such an agreement. And I hope they will all work for it.

I would appeal also to the Press to use its very great influence on the side of moderation and compromise. Remember that the Interim Government can be re-formed to-morrow if the League decides to come in. Meanwhile, it will administer in the interest of the country as a whole and not of any one party or creed.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

It is also essential also that the work of the Constituent Assembly should begin as early as possible. Here again let me remind you that assurances have been given to the Muslim League that the procedure laid down in the statement of May 16 regarding the framing of Provincial and Group constitutions will be faithfully adhered to; that there can be no question of any change in the fundamental principles proposed for the Constituent Assembly in Paragraph 15 of the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, or of a decision on a main communal issue without a majority of both the major communities, and that Congress are ready to agree that any dispute of interpretation may be referred to the Federal Court. I sincerely trust that the Muslim League will reconsider their decision not to take part in a plan which promises to give them so wide a field in which to protect the interests and to decide the future of the Muslims of India.

We have come to another critical and solemn issue in the affairs of India. Never were tolerance and soberness in thought and in action more necessary. Never were the wild speaking and rash deeds for a few fraught with greater danger for many. Now is the time for all Indians in any authority, with any influence, to show by their good sense and restraint that they are worthy of their country and that their country is worthy of the freedom it is to receive.

Mr. Jinnah on Viceroy's Broadcast

Following the announcement about the formation of the Interim Government and the Viceroy's Broadcast, Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* released the correspondence that passed between him and the Viceroy between July 22 and August 8. In a statement releasing the correspondence on the 25th August 1946, Mr. Jinnah said:

It is to be regretted that the Viceroy, in his broadcast last night, should have made such a misleading statement and contrary to facts that, "though five seats out of 14 were offered to the Muslim League, though assurances were given that the scheme of constitution-making would be worked in accordance with the procedure laid down, though the new Interim Government is to operate under the existing constitution, it has not been possible to secure a Coalition." The truth is that the Viceroy wrote to me on July 22, making certain proposals which were vitally and substantially different from the Interim Government proposals embodied in the statement of June 16 and the assurances given to the Muslim League, enclosing a copy of a similar letter addressed by him to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This was on the eve of the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League and the Viceroy knew fully well that a grave situation had been created and that there were serious apprehensions and misgivings about the policy of His Majesty's Government and his attitude in the matter. Nevertheless, there is not a single word in his letter of July 22 with regard to our position *vis-a-vis* the Constituent Assembly in the light of the decision of the Congress, the pronouncements of the Congress leaders and the directive given by the Assam Assembly to Assam's representatives on the Constituent Assembly to have nothing to do with the "C" Group.

I replied to the Viceroy on July 31 clearly stating our position with regard to his new move, which was obviously intended to meet the Congress wishes, for else what justification was there for him to depart even from the final proposals embodied in the statement of June 16? Will the Viceroy explain why should there be any departure from those proposals and the assurances that were given to us and for whose advantage is this new move being made by him?

I received a reply from him dated August 8, acknowledging my letter of July 31: it is amazing that he should have stated therein that his suggestion in his letter of July 22 was the "same as the one the Muslim League Working Committee accepted at the end of June, namely 6:5:3. This is entirely incorrect, as has been already pointed out by me in my letter of July 31. He further says:

"In view of the League resolution of July 29, I have now decided to invite the Congress to make proposals for an Interim Government, and I am sure that if they make a reasonable offer to you of a coalition I can rely on you for a ready response."

I had, and have no knowledge or information as to what actually transpired between the Congress and the Viceroy but, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, I suppose, as arranged, came to see me on August 15. It was merely a formality and he made his offer: that the Congress were willing to give out of 14, 5 seats to the Muslim League and the remaining 9 were to be nominated by them, including one Muslim of their choice; that he was not forming the Executive Council under the present constitution, but, a 'Provisional National Government' responsible to the present Legislative Assembly; and he made it clear in his letter of August 15, in reply to mine of the same date that while he was willing to discuss the larger question with me, he had no new suggestion to make, and added, 'Perhaps, you may be able to make a new approach' and when I did make a suggestion, he turned it down saying that the Congress stand was the same as laid down in their resolution of Delhi passed on June 26 and that the Wardha Resolution of August 10 had only re-affirmed that stand, and this was repeated by him at the Press Conference on August 16 before his departure for Delhi to meet the Viceroy. I informed Pandit Nehru that in these circumstances there was no chance of my Working Committee or the Council of the All-India Muslim League accepting his proposals.

Thereafter the Viceroy, Pandit Nehru and the Congress leaders have now for nearly a week carried on their discussions and negotiations behind my back and without any knowledge or information being furnished to me, except the communique that was issued last night announcing the formation of the Interim Government and the Viceroy's broadcast. As the Viceroy has already disclosed the alleged offer without stating what reply he had received from me, I am herewith releasing the correspondence :

Viceroy's Letter to Mr. Jinnah

Letter from Lord Wavell dated July 22, 1946 to Mr. Jinnah (Personal and Confidential) :

I declared my intention of replacing the present Care-taker Government of officials by an Interim Coalition Government as soon as possible : and am now putting to you as President of the Muslim League and to the President of the Congress the proposals set out below.

2. I think you will probably agree with me that our negotiations both this summer and last year were hampered by the attendant publicity. I am, therefore, seeking your co-operation in conducting, at any rate, the preliminary stage of the negotiations on a strictly personal and secret basis between myself and the two Presidents. I very much hope that you will prevent this correspondence being known to or discussed in the Press until we have seen whether we can find some basis of agreement. I realise, of course, that you will have, at some stage, to secure the approval of your Working Committee ; but I believe it will be best to try and reach some basis of agreement between ourselves. As a first step, I propose the following for your consideration :

(a) The Interim Government will consist of 14 members.

(b) Six members (to include one scheduled Caste representative) will be nominated by the Congress :

Five members will be nominated by the Muslim League.

Three representatives of minorities will be nominated by the Viceroy. One of these places will be kept for a Sikh.

It will not be open to either the Congress or the Muslim League to object to the names submitted by the other party, provided they are accepted by the Viceroy.

(c) Distribution of Portfolios will be decided after the parties have agreed to enter the Government and have submitted their names. The Congress and the Muslim League will each have an equitable share of the most important Portfolios.

(d) The assurances about the status of the Interim Government which I gave in my letter dated May 30 to Maulana Azad will stand.

3. I would welcome a convention, if freely offered by the Congress, that major communal issues can only be decided by the assent of both the major parties, but I have never though that it was essential to make this a formal condition since, in fact, a Coalition Government could work on no other basis.

4. I sincerely trust that your party will agree to co-operate in the administration of India on the above basis, while the work of constitution-making proceeds. I am confident that this will be of the greatest possible benefit to India. I suggest that we should not spend further time in negotiation ; but should try out at once a Government on the basis proposed above. If it does not work and you find the conditions unsatisfactory, it will be open to you to withdraw, but I am confident that you will not.

5. Would you be good enough to let me know very soon whether the Muslim League will enter the Interim Government on this basis ? I have written in similar terms to Pandit Nehru and enclose a copy of my latter to him.

P. S. I am seeing Pandit Nehru this after-noon on other matters and will hand him his letter then.

Mr. Jinnah's Reply

Mr. Jinnah's reply to the above dated July 31 :

Dear Lord Wavell—I am in receipt of your latter of July 22 and I notice that this is the fourth basis that you are suggesting for the formation of your Interim

Government. From 5-5-2. you came to 5-5-3 and then to 5-5-4 as embodied in the statement of the Cabinet Delegation and yourself dated June 16, 1946, which was announced by you as final. Now you are making this fourth proposal, i. e. 6-5-3.

Every time the Congress turned down the previous three proposals, as you were unable to appease them or propitiate them. every time the departure was prejudicial to the League and in favour of the Congress. And now you have put your fourth proposal for my consideration. It gives a go by to all the important terms which were in favour of the Muslim League; the Congress will have six members out of 14 as against 5 members of the Muslim League, which breaks straight-away the principle of parity ; and you are letting down the Scheduled Castes, as one of them is proposed to be nominated by the Congress and not by the real spokesmen of the Scheduled Castes. I note that you say that five members will be nominated by the Muslim League. Next, three members of the minorities will be nominated by the Viceroy without reference to or consultation with the Muslim League. The only indication that you have given is that one of these places will be kept for a Sikh.

Then you proceed on to say that "it will not be open either to the Congress or the Muslim League to object to names submitted by the other party, provided they are accepted by the Viceroy" and from this I gather that it will be open to the Congress to nominate a Quisling Muslim.

As to the distribution of Portfolios. I note you say that "the Congress and the Muslim League will have an equitable share of the most important Portfolios." and not equal at it was originally proposed.

As to the assurance about safeguards i. e. that a major communal issue could only be decided by the consent of both the major parties, you say that "it will be only considered if freely offered by the Congress." but you do not attach much importance to it, and you conclude by saying that if the Interim Government does not work when formed on this basis and if we find conditions unsatisfactory, it will be open to us to withdraw. I believe on the principle, "Prevention is better than cure."

This is a very clear and substantial departure, most detrimental to the Muslim League, and is obviously intended to appease the Congress and devised primarily to meet their wishes.

Taking the final proposal of June 16, 1946, in your letter dated the June 20 you informed me that 14 members were invited by you on the basis of parity between Hindus and Muslims and community-wise and that it will not be changed without the agreement of the two major parties. Apart from the secret talks you had with the Congress, you clearly conveyed to us that the invitees were asked to join specifically on the basis of 5 Hindus, 5 Muslims, one Sikh one Scheduled Caste, one Christian and one Parsi. Your present proposal clearly destroys the principle of parity as well as representation according to communities and gives a clear majority to the Congress as against the Muslim League to start with. Further the Scheduled Caste will be nominated by the Congress, which in my opinion is most unjust to a community of 60 million people, who are groaning under the social and economic tyranny of the high caste Hindus, whom alone the Congress really represents.

As regards the representatives of other minorities, they will be nominated by you without reference to or any consultation with the Muslim League. This again is a departure from what you started in your letter of June 20 that "if any vacancy occurs among the seats at present allotted to the representatives of the minorities, I shall naturally consult both the major parties before filling it." I think you will appreciate that when you start with six Congress and five Muslim League with a Congress majority, the minority representatives will hold a very strong position as a balancing element, who would be nominated by you without even consultation with the Muslim League, and this is a serious departure from what we are assured of in your letter of June 20.

You categorically state in your letter of June 20 paragraph 5 that "no decision on a major communal issue would be taken by the Interim Government if a majority of the representatives of either of the two major parties were opposed to it," whereas now in the present proposals you inform me that you will welcome convention if freely offered by the Congress.

As you have written this letter to me and is strictly personal and secret I can only say that, in my opinion, there is no chance of my Working Committee accepting this proposal.

Viceroy's Final Letter

Letter from the Viceroy dated August 8, 1946 (personal and secret)

I have received your letter of July 31 about my proposal for an Interim Government.

2. I am sorry that things have the way they have, but I do not think it would be profitable now to enter into a detailed discussion of the points you raise in your letter. I will only remind you that the basis of representation which I suggested in the letter to which you now reply is the same as the one the Muslim League Working Committee accepted at the end of June, namely 6:5:3.

3. In view of the League resolutions of July 29 I have now decided to invite the Congress to make proposals for an Interim Government, and I am sure that if they make a reasonable offer to you of a coalition, I can rely on you for a ready response. I have told the President of the Congress that any Interim Government would be on the basis of the assurances given in my letter of May 30 to Maulana Azad.

I hope we may have an opportunity of meeting soon.

Jinnah's Reaction to Wavell's Speech

"The Viceroy's broadcast has struck a severe blow to Muslim League and Muslim India, but I am sure that Musalmans of India will bear this up with fortitude and courage and learn lessons from our failure to secure our just and honourable position in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly", said Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* on the **26th August 1946** at Bombay commenting on the Viceroy's broadcast on the formation of the Interim Government. The following is the text Mr. Jinnah's statement:

"My reaction to the Viceroy's broadcast is that he has struck a severe blow to the Muslim League and Muslim India, but I am sure that Musalmans of India will bear this up with fortitude and courage and learn lessons from our failure to secure our just and honourable position in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly. I once more repeat my question: Why has the Viceroy gone back on what was announced in the Statement of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy on June 16 as final, and the assurances given to the Muslim League in his letter dated June 20? What had happened between June 16 and July 22 that he was pleased to change the formula vitally and substantially, and what has happened between July 22 and August 24 that he has gone ahead and jammed in a one-party Government?

"He says in his broadcast that he was addressing those who advised him that this step should not have been taken in this way or at this time. I was one of those unfortunate persons, and I still maintain that the step that he has taken is most unwise and unstatatesmanlike and is fraught with dangerous and serious consequences and that he has only added insult to injury by nominating three Muslims, who, he knows, do not command either the respect or confidence of Muslim India and two more Muslim names still remain to be announced.

"He is still harping that we are not opposed to the main policy of his Majesty's Government to fulfil their pledges by making India free to follow her destiny. Of course, we are not opposed to the freedom of the peoples of India, and we have made it clear that the only solution of India's problem is a division of India into Pakistan and Hindusthan, which would mean real freedom for the two major nations and every possible safeguard for the minorities in the respective States.

"I am sorrier than the Viceroy is about his failure to secure a Coalition Government but my sorrow springs from a different fountain and for different reasons from those of his. I am glad that the Viceroy realises that what is needed is a Coalition Government in which both the main parties are represented, and I am glad that he is speaking on behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress that they hold this view as strongly as he does and that their efforts will still be directed to persuade the League to join the Government. I don't know what the Viceroy means when he says, in his broadcast, of his offer that has been made and and which is still open. It is so vague except that the Muslim League will have five seats. Nothing else is clearly stated.

"He has referred to many other things into which I need not go at present. As regards the Constituent Assembly, I do not know what he means when he says that, 'Here again let me remind you that assurances have been given to the League that the procedure laid down in the statement of May 16 regarding the framing of Provincial and Group Constitutions will be faithfully adhered to.' It is not a procedure, it is fundamental and basic. The question is whether it can be changed in any way whatsoever. Then he proceeds to say that there can be no question of any change in the fundamental principles proposed for the Constituent Assembly in Paragraph 15 of the Statement of May 16 and he echoes that the Congress is ready to agree that any dispute or interpretation may be referred to the Federal Court. But how can he expect an agreement on the terms and fundmentals of the statement of May 16 which one party puts one interpretation contrary to the authorative statement of the Mission, dated May 25 and the other party puts a different interpretation, which is more in accord with the statement May 25? But he complacently goes on to say that any dispute or interpretation may be referred to the Federal Court. To begin with, there is no provision for such a dispute being referred to the Federal Court, and secondly, on the very threshold, the parties fundamentally differ in higher interpretations regarding the basic terms. Are we going to commence the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly with litigation and law suits in the Federal Court? Is this the spirit in which the future Constitution can be framed affecting the 490 million people of the sub-continent?

"If the Viceroy's appeal is really sincere and if he is in earnest, he should translate it into concrete proposals and by this deeds and actions."

Establishment of Interim Government

The new Interim Government assumed office at New Delhi at 11 a.m. on the **2nd September 1946.**

Seven out of the twelve members took the oath at Viceroy's House. They were Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Asaf Ali, Mr. Ali Zaheer, Mr. Jagjivan Ram and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose. The ceremony lasted about 15 minutes.

Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. John Matthai and Mr. C. Bhabha, were not present to take charge of their departments. Pandit Nehru took charge of their portfolios and held them until their arrival in Delhi to take charge.

The portfolios of the new Interim Government were distributed by H. E. the Governor-General as follows :—

External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations : *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.*
Defence : *Sardar Baldev Singh.*
Home including Information and Broadcasting : *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.*
Finance : *Dr. John Matthai.*
Communications (War Transport and Railways) : *Mr. Asaf Ali.*
Agriculture and Food : *Dr. Rajendra Prasad.*
Labour : *Mr. Jagjivan Ram.*
Health, Education and Arts : *Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan.*
Legislative, Posts and Air :—*Syed Ali Zaheer.*
Industries and Supplies : *Mr. C. Rajagopalachari.*
Works, Mines and Power : Mr. *Sarat Chandra Bose.*
Commerce : Mr. *C. H. Bhabha.*

Pandit Nehru's appeal for Co-operation

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the new Interim Government, in an informal chat with Press correspondents at Delhi on the 2nd September evening said :

"We propose to function as a corporate whole, as a cabinet discussing not only our own individual departmental affairs but discussing all important matters together and coming to joint decisions with joint responsibility."

Pandit Nehru added, "We enter on this enterprise in order to achieve our objective, that is, the complete and full Independence of India."

"If" he went on, "we are co-operating with those whom we have opposed all along in Government, much more so inevitably do we seek the co-operation of every Indian in this country because, after all, the foreign elements in this country are temporarily residents here or temporarily in office. Inevitably they have to go, not physically—they are welcome to stay on in India—but in their official capacity, because obviously India is going to be run by Indians for the benefit of Indians, not to the injury of others, I hope, anywhere, but certainly for the benefit primarily of the people who live in this country, to whatever religion or creed they might belong, in whatever province or part of India they may live."

Pt. Nehru hoped in passing that the practice of giving titles in India would cease. "It has always seemed to me rather degrading that one should have titles attached to his name, unless, of course, they represent some kind of literary excellence or some professional qualification. That is a different thing, but otherwise this business of titles is a relic of an age, which I hope, the world is rapidly leaving behind. So whether you call us Honourables or not, the fact is that we shall consider ourselves the chief servants of the Indian people, and the moment we forget that, we shall not be worthy of the job that has been given to us.

PRACTICAL OUTLOOK NEEDED

"We shall keep our eyes and ears close to the soil of India to see not only how people living in the big houses in New Delhi feel about anything but how the villagers and factory workers see everything."

Pandit Nehru called for a practical outlook. "What are we aiming at? he asked, "Freedom? Yes. Higher standards? Yes. But we are ultimately aiming at feeding, clothing, housing, educating and providing better sanitary and health conditions for four hundred millions. If you approach it in that way, the problem becomes a little more concrete, even though it is vast. Then you can limit it, if you like, to what you can do in five years' time and put definite objectives. We must produce so much food, clothing, provide so much education and housing. etc.—because we cannot achieve everything simply because there is a change in government or simply because we desire it."

Pandit Nehru began by saying that many of his colleagues had not been able to come to Delhi to take charge of their respective portfolios "partly owing to illness, and partly owing to other reasons." The result had been, as far as he was concerned, rather odd. Normally I have been charged with the External Affairs Department and the Commonwealth Relations Department—the two joined together. But, for the moment, may be for ten days or so, I am supposed to be in charge of all the other Departments of my absent colleagues, namely, the portfolios of Defence, Finance—of which I know hardly anything at all—Commerce, Health, Education, Industries and Supply. A queer collection to-day, we started off in the Finance Member's room and for the space of ten or fifteen minutes I discussed high finance. I went on to the Commonwealth Relations Department, where we discussed Commonwealth Affairs.

"Later in the afternoon, I went to the External Affairs Department and spent an instructive hour there and then I finally wound up with the Defence Department and tried to understand the various branches of the war establishment in India. So I have had a varied education (laughter) to-day and in the course of the next day or two I hope to tackle Health, Education, Commerce, Industries and Supplies. Obviously this is more for my own education than for anything else."

JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

"In the main, my job is going to be External Affairs and Commonwealth Affairs. As I was just saying in Hindustani, we propose to function very much as a Cabinet responsible as a whole for everything that we do. The practice so far here has been for various departments to function separately and reporting directly to the Viceroy, and sometimes, when some conflict arose, or some matter had to be considered together, the matter was referred to the Viceroy's Council, but normally they were separate Departments."

"Of course, it is an odd situation and it has its difficult as well as humorous aspects when a group of persons representing a revolutionary tradition and dynamic organisation, representing thus far the permanent Opposition in India which often took to methods of combating the permanent Government of India, come into close touch on a co-operative basis with a static organisation which has not been known in the past to move so rapidly as to make its movement very perceptible to outside observers. Nevertheless, we have entered into this business with every desire to further it co-operatively, in order to achieve our objective—the complete and full Independence of India. It will be a very great achievement in itself and also in the manner of doing it if we can do it peacefully and co-operatively. What will happen the future will show, but it is because we believe in it that we have undertaken this task and we hope to proceed on those lines."

APPEAL FOR CO-OPERATION

Appealing for the co-operation of "every Indian in this country," Pandit Nehru said, "We are all going to remain here and even though we may get irritated with each other, it is obvious we have to live together and we have to work together and co-operate together. Therefore, it becomes incumbent on all of us to seek that wider co-operation and make every effort to achieve it, because after all the problems before us are so vast and intricate even apart from that major and dominating and primary problem of achieving Indian Independence.

The other problems—call them economic, if you like—are allied problems, tremendous in their significance, i.e. how to raise the standards of four hunderd millions. Therefore, it is from the point of view not only of the theoretical objective but the practical objective in terms of the millions of human beings in India that we have to look at these problems."

RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS

"In the future we shall have to have close contact with the Press, because we have to live in close contact with our people. We shall go to them as we have gone to them in the past so much, and meet them face to face at public gatherings. Perhaps, some of us may not have quite so much time for that in the future. Nevertheless, we shall have to go to report to them because they are our masters and we are their servants, though you might add some appellation like 'Honourable' to our names.

"I do not know what effect a fairly lengthy residence in New Delhi might have upon us because it has been my experience that it has a very numbing effect on individuals, and results in a weakening of their intellectual faculties and certainly their physical faculties. May be, we might be affected that way, but I hope not. New Delhi, as it has been constituted thus far, is something entirely apart from India. It does not represent India, although it contains many eminent Indians. "How far it is possible to change this atmosphere of New Delhi and bring it more into line and more into touch with the real Indian atmosphere, I do not know and it is up to all of us to try to do so.

"Anyhow, whether New Delhi changes or not, we have to think in terms larger than New Delhi, of the towns and the factories and the market places of India. If we are to be a popular government, we have to carry the people with us. We cannot function even for their good without the goodwill of the people. Therefore it becomes essential for us to keep in touch through the Press, personally and otherwise. It may be that we may have recourse to broadcasting. Certainly we will, but unfortunately the radio is not sufficiently developed here. There are relatively very few listeners and the listeners are normally newspaper readers. Nevertheless, we should take advantage of every avenue of approach to our people and sometimes, it may be, to the wider public of the world."

League Attitude to Interim Government

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, in an exclusive interview with Gerald J. Rock, United Press of America Staff correspondent at Bombay on the 3rd September stated that he could place no confidence in Congres assurances of equal treatment for Muslims, challenged Mahatma Gandhi's assertion that "Congress could never ally with Britain against the Muslims", and reiterated his contention that Pakistan is the only solution to India's problem.

The League President also made the charge that the Viceroy, Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress "cannot be absolved of their main responsibili y in creating the Calcutta situation."

Referring to the disturbances in Bombay, Mr. Jinnah stated that from "personal knowledge I know that the Mussalman is insulted and taunted by Hindus who already consider that the Hindu Raj is established and that the Mussalman must surrender and submit."

Mr. Jinnah said that threats against his life had been made by anonymous telephone callers and letter writers. "However", he said, "the Muslim League never intended to see that its programme should be carried out in any other way than a peaceful one. The Muslim League has not yet taken any step actually to resort to direct action. Until we determine the course of action, whatever that may be, my instructions to the Mussalmans to conduct themselves in a peaceful manner stand, and those are the instructions issued by every Provincial Muslim League to every member of the League and to Mussalmans generally."

Mr. Jinnah pointed to Russia as a "serious menace if Britain pursues the present policy of completely eliminating the Muslims not only in India but in the entire Middle East."

COMMENT ON NEHRU'S STATEMENT

In reply to a question whether the League could put confidence in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's statement to the Press that "India is going to be run by Indians for the benefit of Indians whatever religion or creed they might belong to, in whatever province or part of India they may live." Mr. Jinnah said "No. We are experiencing every day, in the provinces where the Congress Ministries function under the present constitution, in every department of life, a situation wherein

Muslims not only are unjustly and unfairly treated but positively mistreated. I get daily complaints from all the Congress regime provinces. The observations of Pandit Nehru are meant for propaganda, especially in foreign countries. The Congress is even now busily engaged in obstructing Mussalmans and trying to break the Muslim League Ministries in Bengal and Sind and have successfuly prevented League Ministries from being formed in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Provinces through unscrupulous methods."

Mr. Jinnah's attention was drawn to the statement made by Mr. Gandhi during his Monday evening prayers that the "Congress could never ally with Britain against the Muslims," and that "the Congress had gone into the Interim Government with one object and one only, that of winning freedom—pure and unadulterated—for the whole of India, which meant for the Muslim League also."

"Mr. Gandhi has, I know, spoken and expressed his gratitude to the British for having put the Congress in power at the Centre, and yet he says the Congress would never ally with the British against the Muslims" remarked Mr. Jinnah. "Why did the Congress not accept the proposals of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy of June 16 to form an Interim Government but hold out the threat that if the Interim Government were formed without the Congress there would be dire consequences worse than 1942? And why have they now gone into the Interim Government? Because they have received the terms they wanted and the Viceroy has completely surrendered to them and sacrificed the Muslims. How can we place any confidence in the new Government's intentions which they are now professing? I have no hope of this Government giving Mussalmans a fair deal. The Congress has learnt the art of saying what they do not mean to mislead the public. If Congress and Gandhi were really sincere, I again ask why did they object to the proposals, which were announced as final, and I ask the Viceroy why did he scrap them and surrender to the Congress?"

Asked whether there was any way at this point that the League would participate in the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Jinnah replied: "I see no hope of the League going into the Interim Government and Constituent Assembly, for it will be nothing but abject surrender and humiliation for us."

DIRECT ACTION PROGRAMME

With regard to the programme of direct action Mr. Jinnah said: "I cannot give any indication of the programme to be adopted, but we are fully alive to the fact that any programme that we may put into operation should be based on peaceful means."

Discussing the offer of the Viceroy to the League to join the Interim Government Mr. Jinnah replied, "The principle of parity is gone. The question whether the Congress could nominate a Muslim of their choice is still there, and the safeguard which was assured to us in the June 16th proposal, namely, that no major communal issue should be decided except by agreement of the majority of both the communities, is gone, to say nothing of other details which were promised by the Viceroy in his offer of June 20th to me."

"As for the Constituent Assembly," Mr. Jinnah continued, "the Congress have not accepted the basic and fundamental terms of the statement of June 16th and we are told by the Viceroy in his recent appeal that we should go into the Constituent Assembly with our interpretation and the Congress go there with their interpretation and the matter then be referred to the Federal Court. So we are to start with a law suit. Why don't the authors of the proposals say this is the meaning of it and tell the Congress to accept or reject it? Besides, I see no provision or any reference to a Federal Court except with regard to major communal issues and even there, there is no provision that the President of the Constituent Assembly will be bound by that. Thus, we are left to the tender mercies of the overwhelming majority of the Congress and, most certainly the Hindu President who is bound to be elected by that Hindu majority. There is no check either internal or external in the long-term plan but we are left to the tender mercies of an overwhelming Hindu majority in the Assembly."

COMMUNAL RIOTS

Discussing further the communal disturbances, Mr. Jinnah said: "The Mussalmans had not only made no preparations to disturb the peace—they were not even able to defend themselves when the brutal outrages burst upon them in Calcutta. That is becoming more and more clear from all reliable information that I have received. It was an organised plot to discredit the Muslim League and the Muslim League Ministry on the part of the Hindus elated by the doings of the Viceroy who chose the manner and the time of going ahead with the Interim Government ignoring the League." Referring specifically to the Calcutta disturbances, Mr. Jinnah said: "If the Congress regime are going to suppress, oppress and persecute the Musalmans, if is very difficult to control disturbances."

Mr. Jinnah referred to Pandit Nehru's visit to him in Bombay and said that the Congress leader "declined to discuss anything else or make any suggestion with regard to anything else except to offer five sets to the Muslim League and made it clear that they would nominate the other nine and that it would not be an executive Council under the present constitution but a National Cabinet responsible only to the Central Legislature where again the Hindu majority is at least three to one."

Asked whether there was any alternative at this time besides the establishment of Pakistan which the League will accept, Mr. Jinnah said: "In my opinion there is no other alternative except the outright establishment of Pakistan which means really freedom both for Hindus and Muslims and will enable them to live peacefully and as friendly neighbours without the help of British army."

"We guarantee," Mr. Jinnah declared, "to look after the non-Muslim and Hindu caste minorities in Pakistan which will be about 25 millions and protect and safeguard their interests in every way. Similarly, there will be about 25 or 30 million Mussalmans in Hindusthan and Hindusthan can similarly guarantee the rignts of these minorities. That is the quickest way to India's real freedom and to the welfare and happiness of all peoples inhabiting this sub-continent. The present situation is that the Congress Government in eight Provinces and at the Centre under the present constitution can only carry on under the aegis of the British and with the help of their bayonets. The Congress are unfortunately blind and they are playing into the hands of the British and the British will turn around—they already are declaring to the world and utilising the disturbances to show that if their hold were removed there would be bloodshed, carnage, and chaos, and the Congress are playing into their hands with one obsession, namely, how to down the Muslim League and Muslim India."

"How", asked Mr. Jinnah, "can the writ and fiat of any government be respected, obeyed and honoured when one hundred million people are opposed? Surely not by the ballot box where there is a perennial Hindu majority of three to one against the Mussalman."

Asked whether he attached any significance to the reports that Russia may have more than a spectator's interest in Indian affairs, Mr. Jinnah said: "I do believe that Russia has more than a spectator's interest in Indian affairs and they are not very far from India, either. It is a serious menace and if Britain pursues the present policy of completely eliminating the Muslims, not only in India but the entire Middle East, in my opinion it is a very serious and dangerous policy to pursue."

Pandit Nehru's Broadcast

In his first broadcast from New Delhi on the 7th September, as Vice-president of the Interim Provisional Government, *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru* said that he would not speak of high policy or programme but would thank his listeners for the love and affection they had sent to the Government in abundant measure. India, he said, looked out on the wide world and held out her hands in friendship to the other people of the world, even though that world might still be full of conflict and thoughts of war. Following is the text of the broadcast:

Friends and Comrades—Jai Hind:

Six days ago, my colleagues and I sat on the chairs of high office in the Government of India. A new Government came into being in this ancient land, the Interim or provisional Government we called it, the stepping stone to the full independence of India. Many thousands of messages of greetings and of good wishes came to us from all parts of the world and from every nook and corner of India. And yet we asked for no celebration of this historic event and even restrained our people's enthusiasm. For we wanted them to realise that we were yet on the march and the goal had still to be reached. There were many difficulties and obstacles on the way and our journey's end might not be so near as people thought. Any weakness now, any complacency would be fatal to our cause.

Our hearts were heavy also with the terrible tragedy of Calcutta and because of the insensate strife of brother against brother. The freedom we had envisaged and for which we had laboured, through generations of toil and suffering, was for all the people of India and not for one group or class or the followers of one religion. We aimed at a Co-operative Commonwealth in which all would be equal sharers in opportunity and in all things that give meaning and value to life. Why then this strife, this fear and suspicion of each other?

CALL FOR CO-OPPERATION

I speak to you to-day not much of high policy or our programme for the future—that will have to wait awhile—but to thank you for the love and affection which you have sent us in such abundant measure. That affection and spirit of co-operation are always welcome but they will be needed more than ever in the difficult days ahead of us. A friend sent me the following message: "May you weather every storm, first pilot of the ship of State! *Bon voyage.*" A cheering message but there are many storms ahead and our ship of State is old and battered and slow-moving and unsuited to this age of swift change; it will have to be scrapped and given place to another. But however old the ship and however old the pilot, there are so many millions of willing hearts and hands to help, we can brave the high seas and face the future with confidence.

The future is already taking shape and India, this old and dear land of ours, is finding herself again through travail and suffering. She is youthful again with the bright eyes of adventure, and with faith in herself and her mission. For long years she had been narrowly confined and had lost herself in brooding. But now she looks out on the wide world and holds out her hands in friendship to the other peoples of the world even though that world may still be full of conflict and thoughts of war.

PROPOSE TO FUNCTION AS FREE NATION

The Interim National Government is part of a large scheme which includes the Constituent Assembly which will meet soon to give shape to the constitution of a free and independent India. It is because of this expectation of an early realisation of full independence that we have entered this Government, and we propose to function so as progressively to achieve that independence in action both in our domestic affairs and our foreign relations. We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close and direct contacts with other nations and to co-operate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom.

We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale. We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries and peoples, and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all peoples. We repudiate utterly the Nazi doctrine of racialism, wheresoever and in whatever from it may be practised. We seek no dominion over others and we claim no privileged position over other peoples. But we do claim equal and honourable treatment for our people wherever they may go, and we cannot accept any discrimination against them.

The world, in spite of its rivalries and hatreds and inner conflicts, moves inevitably towards closer co-operation and the building up of a World Commonwealth. It is for this one world the free India will work, a world in which there is the free co-operation of free peoples and no class or group exploits another.

In spite of our past history of conflict, we hope that an independent India will have friendly and co-operative relations with England and the countries of the British Commonwealth. But it is well to remember what is happening in one part of the Commonwealth to-day. In South Africa racialism is the State doctrine and our people are putting up a heroic struggle against the tyranny of a racial minority. If this racial doctrine is going to be tolerated, it must inevitably lead to vast conflicts and world disaster.

We sent our greetings to the people of the United States of America to whom destiny has given a major role in international affairs. We trust that this tremendous responsibility will be utilised for the furtherance of peace and human freedom everywhere. To that other great nation of the modern world, the Soviet Union, which also carries a vast responsibility for shaping world events, we send greetings. They are our neighbours in Asia and inevitably we shall have to undertake many common tasks and have much to do with each other.

We are of Asia and the peoples of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of Western, Southern and South-East Asia. In the past her culture flowed to all these countries. They came to her in many ways. Those contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see a closer union between India and South-East Asia on the one side, and Afghanistan, Iran and the Arab world on the West. To the furtherance of that close association of free countries we must devote ourselves. India had followed with anxious interest the struggle of the Indonesians for freedom and to them we send our good wishes.

China, that mighty country, with a mighty past, our neighbour has been our friend through the ages and that friendship will endure and grow. We earnestly hope that her present troubles will end soon and a united and democratic China will emerge, playing a great part in the furtherance of world peace and progress.

RELIEF TO THE PEOPLE

I have not said anything about our domestic policy, nor at this stage do I wish to do so. But that policy will inevitably have to be governed by the principles by which we have stood all these years. We shall look to the common and forgotten man in India and seek to bring him relief and raise his standard of living. We shall continue our fight against the curse of untouchability and other forms of enforced inequality, and shall especially try to help those who are economically or otherwise backward. To-day millions lack food and clothing and houses, and many are on the verge of starvation. To meet this immediate need is an urgent and difficult task and we hope other countries will help us by sending foodgrains.

An equally urgent and vital task for us is to conquer the spirit of discord that is abroad in India. Out of mutual conflict we shall never build the house of India's freedom of which we have dreamt so long. All of us in this land have to live and work together, whatever political developments might take place. Hatred and violence will not alter this basic fact ; nor will they stop the changes that are taking place in India.

"CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY NOT AN ARENA FOR CONFLICT"

There has been much heated argument about sections and groupings in the Constituent Assembly. We are perfectly prepared to and have accepted, the position of sitting in sections, which will consider the question of formation of groups. I should like to make it clear on behalf of my colleagues and myself, that we do not look upon the Constituent Assembly as an arena for conflict or for the forcible imposition of one viewpoint over another. That would not be the way to build up a contented and united India. We seek agreed and integrated solutions with the largest measure of goodwill behind them, We shall go to the Constituent Assembly with the fix determination of finding a common basis for agreement on all controversial issues. And so, in spite of all that has happened and the hard words that have been said, we have kept the path of co-operation open and we invite even those who differ from us to enter the Constituent Assembly as equal partners with us with no binding commitments. It may well be that when we meet and face common tasks our present difficulties will fade away.

India is on the move and the old order passes. Too long have we been passive spectators of events, the playthings of others. The initiative comes to our people now and we shall make the history of our choice. Let us all join in this mighty task and make of India the pride of our heart, great among nations, foremost in the arts of peace and progress. The door is open and destiny beckons to all. There is no question of who wins and who loses, for we have to go forward and together as comrades and either all of us win or all go down together. But there is going to be no failure. We go foward to success, to Independence and to the freedom and well-being of the four hundred millions of India—Jai Hind.

Mr. Jinnah's complaint against British Cabinet

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah,* President of the All-India Muslim League, released from Bombay on the 10th September the full official text of the interview which he gave to Mr. *Ralph Izzard* of the *Daily Mail* from wich a few extracts were quoted in papers which Mr. Jinnah said were not quite correct. Mr. Jinnah said :

"For the peace of India and the peace of the world a fresh start must be made. The wound is too deep and the negotiation of this summer has led to too much rancour for us to prolong the present arguments. The slate must be wiped clean and we must begin from the beginning again. I shal never now go to London after what has been done by the Victory to plead my case ; but were his Majesty's Government to invite me to London to start a new series of conferences on an equal footing with other negotiators, I should accept. No man can witness the present scenes of bloodshed in India without feelings of sorrow and pain. At the same time if the British insist on doing nothing more than to support the present Interim Government with their bayonets, all I can say is that the Muslims can suffer it, but will never submit to it. If British withdraw both their troops and their interest in the administration, as they should if they cannot manage honourably, we can sort out things for ourselves."

Referring to Pandit Nehru's broadcast, "which is applauded by the Congress newspapers as an assurance to the Muslim League on Provincial Grouping, Mr. Jinnah said: "These are very vague words; he has made no definite proposals to me; you cannot butter parsnips with words; I have been stabbed and vague phrases and words alone will not stop the bleeding.

"What am I supposed to do now? It would be foolish for me to draft a series of demands and risk the possibility of having to retract one or more of them because the Congress refused to accept them. We have reached a deadlock; when Pandit Nehru came to me recently to offer me five seats in the new Central Government he refused to discuss any other problem.

"The fact remains that Muslims in India have suffered a monstrous perpetration of wrong at the hands of the British Government. To be charitable, all I can say is that the Labour Government is too new and inexperienced to understand the problem fully. They have allowed themselves to be tricked by the Congress. They have failed to realise that there are two distinct nations in India. Each has different fundamental characteristics and natural ambitions. I can understand an alliance or treaty between them and they might in certain circumstances unite temporarily to face a common danger. But the idea of a permanent coalition is absurd. As the position now is, one distinct nation is placed at the mercy of the numerical superiority of another.

"I see very dark future ahead. I have received letters and telegrams of sympathy from all over the Muslim world. If relations between Great Britain, America and Russia worsen, there is no means of telling now which way Indian Muslims may be stampeded at a time of crisis. The question we ask is, 'What have we done to deserve this.' We have no reason to love the British but in 1942 when the Congress started their resistance movement against you, with the enemy at India's border, we refused to join it. At that time I can remember touring Muslim villages where women were reduced to the task of grave-digging because the entire manpower of the community was serving with the army.

"We accepted all proposals made to us by the Cabinet Mission; if I appeared tardy it was because I had been empowered only to negotiate and the final decision of refusal or acceptance had to be deferred to the next meeting of the All-India Muslim League Council. If we had later reversed our decision, it was because the Congress only accepted the long-term proposals with reservations which they refused to clarify."

"If you try to sell me this article," said Mr. Jinnah pointing to a silver ash-tray, "and a piece of it is missing, I am entitled to ask you to replace the missing part before I agree to accept it. Subsequent Congress speeches and actions have proved that our course was amply justified."

Talking of the present wave of riotings throughout India, Mr. Jinnah indignantly disclaimed that Muslims were responsible. He said, "Prior to August 16, that is Direct Action day, when the rioting broke out in Calcutta we had issued very strictest instructions through our Press, by circular and by letters to local League leaders, that there was to be no violence. The sole purpose of the day was to explain to the public why direct action had become necessary. We are entitled to free speech and to the right to stage peaceful demonstrations. We were attacked by Congress followers because they wanted to stamp out our propaganda and discredit our cause by creating disturbances and then throwing the blame on us."

Defining direct action, Mr. Jinnah stated that it was passive non-co-operation with the Government. It had not yet been resorted to and the details of the form which it is to take are now being worked out by a Special Committee in Delhi. Renunciation by League Members of the titles conferred by the

British was not a direct action measure but a protest against the present attitude of the British Government.

Mr. Jinnah Raises Civil War Bogey

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, declared in an interview with the Associated Press of America at Bombay on the 10th Setember that India stands at the brink of ruinous civil war involving her 400,000,000 Hindus. Muslims and small minorities, which only prompt, sincere and skilled diplomatic negotiations could avert.

Mr. Jinnah described the Calcutta and Bombay disorders as "undoubtedly symptoms of the nearness of civil war all over India, and of the pattern which such a civil war might follow."

Already on record in interviews as declaring his readiness to participate in a peace conference in London at which "a fresh start" might be made towards a settlement of the Indian question, Mr. Jinnah discussed the difficulties which such a conference would have to surmount and why he felt it should be held.

"We dealt with underlings in the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission," Mr. Jinnah said. "Now, therefore, our remedy must lie with those at the top in the British Government."

MUSLIMS FACE TWO CHOICES

"Underlings have brought us to a point where we face two choices and only two. One is the choice of a civil war which would ruin the Hindu and Muslim nations alike, and from which, I hope, we can be spared, although we are nearer to it than many persons seem able to realise or willing to admit. The other choice is a peaceful settlement through negotiations among the leaders from this country and the highest authorities in Britain. This would have to be a conference in which the good of the people, instead of the face-saving of individuals, would be of paramount consideration. It would need to be carried out in calm surroundings, with sincere determination, honesty and skill."

Mr. Jinnah gave the warning that "every proposal will be looked upon by me from the point of view of its value towards the achievement of the Pakistan demand, while the Congress will look at it from the point of view of avoiding Pakistan and establishing Akhand Hindustan and Hindu Raj over the entire sub-continent of India."

"Even more is at stake than the peace of the people of India," Mr. Jinnah said. "This is the sort of situation which breeds world wars. Britain is alienating 100,000,000 Muslims with her present policies. Does not that seem to be a dangerous thing for the peace of the world, when we consider what has happened elsewhere?"

NO NEGOTIATION WITH RUSSIA

"I am not negotiating with Russia, nor am I hoping to negotiate with Russia for her intervention in the affairs of India. Any such story is nonsense, if anyone is spreading it. Recitation of the lessons which history teaches does not constitute an invitation to some foreign power to do certain things."

Mr. Jinnah said there is no basis for the assertions which have been made that his objective is to achieve Pakistan which would be a colony of the British Government. "That definitely is not true," he added. "We want an independent, sovereign Pakistan and we will have it."

"These disorders," Mr. Jinnah said, returning to the subject of disturbances in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere, "are not a civil war, although they are close to becoming one. The fact that they have been precipitated on the days of Muslim League demonstrations against having the Interim Government forced upon us is not our doing. We were exercising our right of peaceful protest, and we did not start these disorders. There was an organised, pre-meditated move to mar the effectiveness of the protest and to discourage the Muslim League."

Congress Endorses Interim Government

The Delhi All-India Congress Committee Meeting

The A. I. C. C. endorsed by an overwhelming vote at New Delhi on the **23rd September**, the decision of the Congress leaders to form an Interim Government.

Pandit Nehru, in his address, reviewed the circumstances in which the Working Committee decided to enter the Interim Government.

Pandit Nehru said he did not know if it would be proper for members in the Interim Government to be members of the Working Committee as well. Indeed, it would be difficult for a person to discharge both responsibilities. He did not know what was there in store in the future. May be, there was conflict in store; the future was unpredictable. It was impossible for a person to hold office in the Interim Government and at the same time, continue to be the Congress President as well. These were big questions which the A.I.C.C. should resolve. There was a resolution on the subject and it was for the House to decide whether to accept it or not.

Assumtion of Office

Three weeks ago, the Congress President went on, the Congress assumed office at the Centre. They entered the Secretariat to find a huge building with any number of rooms where thousands of people worked. It appeared to him that one might stay in that building for years and yet never know what was happening in the other corner. He was in charge of External Affairs. India's contacts with foreign countries were growing fast even though she might not yet be completely free. The Interim Government had not yet announced its foreign and domestic policy, but of course that policy would be the policy of the A. I. C. C. The Congress had assumed a great responsibility in forming the Interim Government. They were there to construct a new edifice. And it was for the A. I. C. C. to help them in that task. The whole world was watching the Congress and India. India could not live in isolation. What happened elsewhere in the world affected us. Similarly the whole world would be affected by our policy.

India, Pandit Nehru continued, would throw in her weight in the cause of peace. She would make her contribution to bring about peace. In doing so, she would take an independent stand and not act as a satellite. India's *foreign policy* would affect the whole world. India should strive for the liberation of colonial countries. International problems were, of course, intricate and complex. From what one heard as to what was happening in the Paris Peace Conference or at the U. N. Assembly it all looked like a "chiria-khana" (place where birds are fed). There was confusion. Just then he was not in a position to assess correctly the state of affairs and India should avoid taking a wrong decision. All the facts were not before them. They, however, realised that two powerful nations in the world, the United States and Russia, could make and unmake things. They could bring about lasting peace or disaster.

Pandit Nehru referred to the Communists in India and said that they were opposed to the fundamental policy of the Congress at a critical time in its history. This conflict should not be taken to indicate that India was against Russia, a Communist State. Whatever foreign policy the present Interim Government might formulate it would be that of a free country. Our foreign policy would be for peace in the world. Accordingly, in international councils our representatives will work as peacemakers. We are for peace and not for war, he said.

New Frontier Policy Needed

Earlier, Pandit Nehru said that they should have a new Frontier policy. Problems in the tribal areas should be solved differently. The Congress had all along urged revision of the policy with regard to the tribal areas. The Congress was opposed to aerial bombing and had condemned it in the past. Now soon after the Government had taken charge they heard there was bombing on the Frontier. The first information he got on the subject was from Badshah Khan (Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan). He was grateful to Badshah Khan for the timely public statement he issued.

"After I read the statement in the newspapers," Pandit Nehru said, "I did what possibly could be done in the matter, for a more painful incident I could not have through of, occuring as it did just on the assumption of office by the Interim Government. But the actual bombing was over by then. As a matter of fact it was over even before Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan's statement."

The question now remained as to what should be the Interim Government's policy especially with regard to the tribal areas. The old policy was there in existence for over a century. Now that must be changed.

The tribal policy affected the whole of India. Our policy, he said, should be that we maintain brotherly and friendly relations with the tribal people. They were not foreigners but our own kith and kin. There was the question of Beluchistan, where there was no Responsible Government. It was a big problem which faced the Interim Government and something must be done immediately.

Interim Government Ratified

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad moved the resolution ratifying the Congress acceptance of the Interim Government. The resolution read: "The All-India Congress Committee having considered the direction of the Working Committee to the President to accept the invitation of the Viceroy to form an Interim Government, approve of this direction and ratify the subsequent steps taken thereunder, resulting in the formation of the Interim Government."

Commending the resolution, Maulana Azad said that the step which the Congress had taken was the only correct step. During the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, the Congress strove hard for a complete settlement. The Committee was aware of the reasons that led the Congress to accept the long-term scheme and reject the Interim Government proposal. Since then, the situation had changed and the Congress had accepted the Interim Government. He said he would deal with the criticisms against the resolution in his reply.

Dr. *Pattabhi Sitaramayya*, seconding the resolution, said that the Congress struggle could not go on endlessly. After every struggle there was always a pause and peace. If there was any doubt, or if the terms of a peace settlement were not properly fulfilled, then there was again conflict. All the same, there could not be an everlasting struggle. The Interim Government, he said, was like a bridge. India's goal was beyond the bridge and they had to cross the bridge before reaching the destination of freedom. Participation in the Interim Government was to hasten the achievement of freedom.

AMENDMENT RULED OUT

The Congress *President* ruled out of order an amendment moved by Mr. *Ansar Harvani*, which directed the Interim Government to press for the immediate declaration of India's complete independence; immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops, abolition of the Viceroyalty and the immediate election of a sovereign Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal adult suffrage to draft the constitution of a free and sovereign India.

Pandit *Nehru* also ruled out of order another amendment of Mr. *Achyut Patwardhan* which, *inter alia*, directed the Interim Government "to create conditions, by such means as removal of British troops as to endow the constitution-making body with sovereignty" and thereby to transcend the limitations imposed by the British Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16 and further to transform the Interim Government into an instrument of sovereign power.

Mr. *Bishambar Dayal Tripathi* (United Provinces) opposed the resolution. He said that by accepting the resolution, the revolutionary spirit of the people would be blunted. He did not think that the Interim Government was a "bridge" as Dr. Pattabhi described it. It might be that the leaders might cross the "bridge" and land themselves in a ditch. The only way to achieve complete independence was to launch a struggle, he said.

Mr. *Sheel Bhadra Yajee* (Bihar) regretted that a revolutionary like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should have joined the Interim Government. He thought that the Congress would suffer in prestige and lose its revolutionary outlook by joining the Government. He said the A.I.C.C. should rectify the mistake and "remove the leaders out of darkness."

Sardar Pratap Singh, member of the Working Committee, said that the Congress leadership was not carried away by slogans. It was fighting for power for the people and the A.I.C.C. should have confidence in those who took up the Interim Government. If the goal of the Congress to achieve Independence was not realised, then it was open to the Committee to launch a struggle. True revolutionary ardour, he said, could not be damped by participation in the Interim Government.

SOCIALIST ATTITUDE

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain*, the Socialist leader, said that the formation of the Interim Government was the result of the policy of the Congress. People knew that he and his colleagues in the Socialist Party were opposed to that very policy, which led the Congress to take up the Government. Hence the responsibility for taking up office was that of the Congres and not of the Socialists. Nevertheless, the Socialists were with the Congress. The Interim Government to-day was a fact and the Socialists did not want the Government to resign. In regard to the resolution before the House, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain said that the Socialists would not oppose the resolution, but they would not vote for it either.

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati (Bihar) opposed the resolution. He said that the idea of the Constituent Assembly, as contained in the Cabinet Mission's proposal, appeared to be a "conspirary". He asked why the summoning of the Constituent Assembly was being postponed from time to time.

Maulana Hifzur Rehman (United Provinces) said that he would have liked the Congress keeping out of office, so long as India was not independent. He criticised the composition of the Interim Government and said it would have been better if the five sets allotted to the League had not been filled in.

Maulana Hifzur Rehman added that on the one hand the door was kept open for the Muslim League to enter the Government while on the other Congress Muslims were being appointed with the condition that they should give up office when the League elects to enter. No honest and self-respecting Nationalist Muslim could submit to such a procedure. He opposed the resolution.

Mr. *Achyut Patwardhan*, the Congress Socialist Leader, said that the Congress leaders, by their participation in the Interim Government, were treading on very slippery ground. At the Bombay meeting of the A. I. C. C. the President and other leaders assured the Committee that the Congress was entering the Constituent Assembly without any commitments. But later on they had to declare that they accepted the Cabinet Mission's statements in its entirety. Mr. Patwardhan thought that, that was due to pressure from the Viceroy, the Muslim League and the Princes.

Mr.Patwardhan said he wanted to move an amendment but that had not been possible. He would, however, press for the views mentioned in the amendment. The administration of India, he said, should not be carried with the help of alien troops. Foreign troops must be withdrawn. He would prefer Hindus and Muslims to fight among themselves rather than keep foreign troops in India to maintain order. After all, both the communities must one day ultimately realise that they must live together in this country and live in peace.

Referring to the functioning of the Interim Government, Mr. Patwardhan said that it was no good depending upon honest intention. The Government should take into account the obstacles with which it was faced and deal with them accordingly. The Interim Government should look into the Political Department which, he said, was conspiring with the Princes to the detriment of the people. The Interim Government should also put an end to monopolies and curb capitalism.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Frontier Leader, said he would like to clear any misunderstanding that might have been created by some speakers who referred to the bombing in the tribal areas. The air operations, he said, took place before the Interim Government was installed. The British authorities kept it a secret. He heard about the bombing on August 30 and immediately he told his brother, Dr. Khan Saheb, Premier of the N. W. F. P. about it. Dr. Khan Saheb saw the Governor the following day, September 1 who confirmed the aerial bombing and said it was being stopped. He understood actually air operations ceased on September 1 and the Interim Government had nothing to do with the order for air action.

MAULANA AZAD'S REPLY TO DEBATE

Replying to the debate, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* said that the A. I. C. C. should differentiate between the end and the means, although it was human nature to ignore such a difference. During the last sixty years of its career, the Congress did not join the machinery of the Government to achieve its object. The method it adopted was but a means to an end and not the end itself. The goal of the Congress was Complete Independence. It also happened that prolonged political agitation and struggle became almost an article of faith, that there were Congressmen to-day who believed that a struggle was an end in itself and were hesitant to abandon it. "Our achievement to-day is because of the methods we employed in the past," the Maulana said. He added: ‘To-day our goal—freedom—is within sight. With the change in circumstances and the particular situation in which we find ourselves, we must change our methods as well. To-day we are in such a position that by joining the Government, we could increase our strength enormously. Times have changed. The British Government has changed. The British Government has been compelled to change its attitude. We must, therefore, change our attitude as well and adopt means to hasten our march to freedom."

Maulana Azad said that he would welcome any move which would hasten freedom. Congress leaders had joined the Interim Government with that end in view. The community, as a whole, to-day was faced with grave economic problems. It was the duty of the Congress to solve those difficulties and not to shirk responsibilities because of certain apprehensions. The British Government was prepared to concede Nationalist India's demands. Was it suggested, he asked, that we should refuse the British offer? For all practical purposes, he said the Interim Government would function as a free Government. It should be appreciated that no change in the existing constitution could be brought about immediately.

He agreed that foreign troops should be withdrawn from India but it could not be done in an hour's time.

Maulana Azad denied that there was any change in the attitude of the High Command towards the Cabinet Mission's proposal between July last when the A. I. C. C. met in Bombay and now. He stood by every word which he uttered then. He would repeat it again that the Congress was entering the Constituent Assembly without any conditions and reservations imposed on it. They were entering the Constituent Assembly as free men to frame a free Constitution. The Congress stood for Complete Independence and it would strive without any conditions and limitations for the achievement of freedom. This, of course, was the political aspect of the problem. But then, unfortunately, there was a communal aspect as well. Due to circumstances over which the Congress had no control, the communal aspect had assumed a proportion which could not be ignored and which must be solved. For its solution, it was found that certain clarification of the Congress standpoint was necessary. He did not think there was any contradiction in the Congress stand.

The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority, twelve members voting against in a house of 255.

No Ban on Government Members

Pandit Govinda Ballabh Pant next moved the following resolution: "No one will be debarred from the membership of the Working Committee or any other body of the Congress on account of his holding office in the Interim Government."

He said that the Working Committee had given liberty to members to express their views freely on this subject. Pandit Nehru, he added, had not joined the Government of his own free will; he was there because we asked him to be there. The resolution approving the formation of the Interim Government had been passed by the house and after that, were members who had joined that Government to be considered unworthy of serving the country as members of the Working Committee? Pandit Pant admitted that the Interim Government's powers were at present limited, but he reminded the House, it was a Cabinet with great potentialities.

The Working Committee without these members, said Pandit Pant, would not have the same prestige or influence, and we were not justified in depriving the Committee of that prestige and influence. Pandit Pant referred to the example of free and democratic countries, where party heads were heads of Government also. India was not free yet, but we had to find a way in which the work of the Congress and of the Government might be carried on without conflict. "Let us have no ban on members of the Government remaining members of the Committee. We may, if we like, leave it to the discretion of the members themselves to decide whether to remain or keep out."

Dr. *P. C. Ghosh*, supporting the resolution, contended that joining the Interim Government was part of the fight for freedom. He reminded the House that if participation in the Interim Government did not bring us nearer to the goal, it was open to us to call the members back. We would be doing no justice to these trusted leaders if we feared that by joining the Government they would lose their independence of mind and become Government men.

Mr. *Ansar Harwani*, opposing the resolution, stressed the importance of work in the Interim Government and among the masses and said that all we sought to ensure was a proper division of these two kinds of activities, so that neither would suffer. He urged that the Congress organisation must be kept distinct from the Government, so that in any case of difference between the two, a proper decision might be taken.

AMENDMENTS

Sj. Suresh Chandra Misra moved an amendment to the effect that "no one be debarred from the membership of any elected body of the Congress on account of his holding office in the Interim Government of any Provincial Government, but he or she shall not be eligible for membership in any executive body in the Congress."

Mr. Mahabir Tyagi, opposing the original resolution, suggested that it would be amended so that "the number of members of the Interim Government, together with the ministers of Provincial Governments, shall in no case exceed one-third of the total strength of the body concerned and that these members shall not hold any office thereon." Mr. Tyagi said that democracy required that the Government must either face a strong and free opposition by the people or must submit to the control of the people from outside. "In India", he said, "we have monopolised all politics and left no strong party to oppose our Governments. It is, therefore, necessary that we must have outside control over both the Interim as well as Provincial Governments."

He went on to illustrate his argument by referring to the alleged high-handedness of one of the district officers of the U. P. Government with regard to grain collection. The President intervened with a heavy hand and called the speaker to order, declaring he had never in his experience of the A. I. C. C. heard a more irrelevent speech. Mr. Tyagi expressed disagreement with the chair's ruling and cut short his observations.

Mr. *Jagannadha* Rao moved a further amendment to provide that no one be debarred from membership of the Working Committee or any other body of the Congress except the Parliamentary Board on account of his holding office in the Interim Government."

Mr. Rao said if members of the Government were on the Parliamentary Board the Congress would be unable to criticise or supervise their work. Sardar Patel had already said that Provincial Congress Committees were not superior bodies to the Provincial Legislature parties and that any friction between the two should be looked into by the Parliamentary Board. "To-morrow, they may say that the A.I.C.C. is not a superior body to the Central Legislature Party."

Mr. *R. K. Sidhwa* moved his amendment to the effect that the President should also be free to continue in office after joining the Government. Mr. Sidhwa said that present circumstances demanded close co-operation between the Working Committee and the Government. It was possible that a new President in Pandit Nehru's place might choose members of the Working Committee, who might not work in harmony with members of the Interim Government. Mr. Sidhwa pleaded that Pandit Nehru, with his reputation in the international field, should be invited to continue as President.

Rao Saheb Patwardhan mentioned that if the Working Committee had refrained from giving any positive lead in the matter, it remained for the members assembled to give a decision. His personal view was that the members of the Government should cease to be members of the Working Committee. He reminded the House that no ban existed at present on the President of the Congress continuing in that office after forming the Interim Government. Pandit Nehru had announced his decision to resign from the Presidentship. The speaker did not see why that position should not apply equally to membership of the Working Committee. After all, membership of the Government involved certain inherent limitations. Furthermore, members of the Government could emulate the illustrious example of Gandhiji and take on the role of advisers and guides instead of active members of the Working Committee.

Khwaja Inayatullah, opposing the resolution, contested the argument that absence of these leaders would lower the Working Committee's prestige. He added that if their entry into Government was part of the fight for freedom, then they should be enabled to give undivided attention and energy to that work, free from the exacting tasks that went with the membership of the Working Committee.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad referred to what happened in 1937 when the same question was raised with regard to membership of the Provincial Ministries and of the Working Committee and it was decided that membership of the two bodies be kept separate. After the recent elections, however, the decision was kept in abeyance and the position was discussed at the meeting of the Working Committee. Maulana Azad revealed that six members of the Working Committee were against permitting simultaneous membership of the Working Committee and of the Government, while seven or eight were in favour of it. It was, therefore, decided to leave the decision to the A. I. C. C. Giving his personal view, Maulana Azad declared that the country had not reached that stage in its journey towards Independence when we could allow the same person to retain membership of the two bodies together. The Interim Government, he declared, was only a half-way house on the road to Independence and when members of the Working Committee were also members of that Government, the country was apt to make the mistake

—the dangerous mistake—that the final goal had been reached and people would weaken and get bogged in the mire of inaction.

Mr. *A. Kaleswara Rao,* supporting the resolution, said that as the leaders who had now joined the Interim Government were the builders of the Congress movement and had won the rights they had to-day, it would be of great advantage if they were in both organisations. The Interim Government was working under the old constitution and, therefore, he suggested that the influence and backing they would command as members of the Working Committee would stand them in good stead in their dealings with the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain,* opposing the resolution, said the passing of the resolution would end a very good tradition built up by the Congress. Nothing would be farther from the truth than to suggest that these leaders would give up their fight for freedom once they joined the Government, but the fight for freedom would not be carried on with the same vigour if leaders were called upon to conduct it on two fronts. If in 1937, the Working Committee thought it improper to allow members to attempt to serve on two different organisations, he saw no reason why that convention should be given up now. As a progressive organisation which should grow from strength to strength, the Congress had to build up a second line of leaders equipped and trained to take the place of older leaders as they vacated their place on key organisations. He was confident that younger men were there to shoulder the responsibility borne hitherto by the older leaders.

Mr. *Annapurnayya,* opposing, said that it was a poor tribute to the organising capacity of their leaders to say that the Congress would be unable to fill up the gap left by those leaders. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel had trained many leaders in the Congress. There was enough talent among the rank and file of the Congress to fill up the gap.

Sardar Pratap Singh, supporting the resolution, said the situation now was different from that in 1937 and there was, therefore, nothing wrong in altering the decision taken in that year. He was of the view that any attempt to debar members of the Interim Government from continuing as members of the Working Committee would produce the impression among the general public that joining the Government was something wrong or bad. Such an impression should not be permitted to spread.

Mr. *Purshottam Tricumdas,* opposing, said: "The Congress is above the personalities and I am perfectly certain that in the Congress we have sufficient talent to fill the places of these leaders, no doubt with their help for a certain amount of time." He pointed out that in 1921, when the Congress underwent a transformation with the advent of Gandhiji, all the leaders who to-day were tested and tried leaders, were entirely new men. If members of the Government were also members of the Executive, he was afraid that being after all human beings, they would try to dominate the Congress.

Master Mota Singh (Punjab), opposing the resolution, said: "We cannot tolerate a personality like Pandit Nehru to work in the Interim Government under the British King." If the members of the Working Committee are allowed to be members of the Government, it would become a precedent, which would be difficult to shake off. The House at this stage adjourned

Second Day—New Delhi—24th September 1946

After two and a half hours' debate this morning, the A. I. C. C. passed by a large majority Pandit Pant's resolution, permitting members of the Interim Government to be members of the Congress Working Committee.

One hundred and thirty-five members voted for and 80 against the resolution. Mr. Jai Prakash Narain and other Congress Socialists were among those who opposed the resolution.

Amendments seeking to limit the proportion of members who should be on the Interim Government or Provincial Ministries were lost.

Pandit Nehru said that the result of the voting should be taken as a victory or defeat. He congratulated the A. I. C. C on conducting the debate on such a high level without any acrimony. Personally he would prefer to be the President of the Indian National Congress than be a member of the Interim Government. He did not know whether he would hold office two or three months hence. He agreed with the Socialists that the Congress would have to be prepared for a struggle if there would any necessity for one.

Mahatma Gandhi came to the A. I. C. C. when Pandit Pant was moving the resolution, and he sat on the dais for some time. Some of the members requested him to speak but the President announced that Mahatma Gandhi was not willing to address.

Mr. *Deben Day*, opposing, said that the reasons which made the Working Committee in 1937 debar members of the Provincial Ministries from membership of executive bodies of the Congress held good in the case of members of the Interim Government who had accepted office only on an experimental basis. Moreover, the task of rooting out corruption would take up all the time of the members of the Interim Government and they would, therefore, have no time to devote to the Congress organisation. He also opposed the resolution because he wanted a fresh leadership to be generated.

Syed Nausher Ali said that he had originally thought of moving an amendment to the effect that at no time should more than one member of the Interim Government be on the Working Committee. In considering this question, he said, they would have to consider the question of principle combined with expediency. While there might arise occasions when the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee would have to issue directions to the Interim Government, at the same time it was desirable that the Working Committee should have the benefit of the wisdom of veteran leaders. In the present situation in the country, it was desirable that the Interim Government should be completely divorced from the Congress organisation. He submitted that all these considerations would be met with if a few members of the Interim Government were on the Working Committee, with the proviso that the overwhelming majority in the Working Committee would be non-members of the Interim Government.

Mr. *Amir Mohd. Khan* (N. W. F. P.) supported the resolution. He disagreed with Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, who had urged that in considering the resolution personalities should not be taken into account. Mr. Khan asked whether it would be possible to forget leaders like Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel and Badshah Khan. Maulana Azad had explained yesterday that it was due to the sixty-years struggle put up by the Congress that the Interim Government was formed to-day. If the formation of the Interim Government was a success for the organisation, then why should the leaders who were in that Government be prevented from remaining in the Working Committee? The Congress could not afford at the present critical time to be without the guidance of the leaders who were in the Interim Government.

Acharya Kripalani, former General Secretary of the Congress, declared that the Congress President must be guided by what was laid down in the constitution of the Congress and not by the resolution of the A. I. C. C. It was a fundamental issue before the House and it had two aspects, the practical point of view and the other the theoretical side of it. Considering the question from the point of view of principle, it should be noted that the Congress organisation had no other principles but those laid down in the Congress constitution. If any new principle had to be incorporated in the constitution, then the right course was to amend the constitution. At present there was no such principle which allowed those who accepted office to be debarred from the central executive or the Provincial committees of the Congress. Supposing the President wanted to include a member of the Government in his executive and the A. I. C. C. was opposed to it, then the President should be guided by the Congress constitution and not by a resolution of the A. I. C. C. He urged the A. I. C. C. not to put itself in such a position where its views would be ignored by the President.

Mr. Kripalani continued: "You will say that their guidance will be available as invitees to the Working Committee meetings. But I must say, as an invitee I do not feel that responsibility which I felt as a member of the Committee. You must remember that these leaders in the Interim Government are busy people and an invitee is not responsible to what extent as a member is responsible. If you make them members, then they will have to find time to do the work. Then their guidance will be more responsible."

Referring to the argument that new people should be trained to shoulder the responsibility, Mr. Kripalani said that training could not be had in the Working Committee and it could come only by doing constructive work and field work. Any one who desired training should not start from the top but from the bottom. Mr. Kripalani said that it was his considered view that some of those who were in the Interim Government should also be on the Congress Executive. It was true that the members in the Government would co-operate with the Congress, but at the same time it would not be doing justice to the Congress itself to exclude them..

It might be, Mr. Kripalani continued, that leadership might betray the country, as had happened in many countries but that risk had to be taken. It would, however, be unfair and premature to distrust our leaders. He supported the resolution.

PANDIT PANT'S REPLY

Earlier, Pandit Pant, replying to the debate on his resolution, moved the previous day, invited the House to understand the exact meaning of the resolution before voting on it. He made it clear that the resolution was permissive. It merely sought to remove an obstacle in the way of the President choosing, if he wanted to do so, members of the Interim Government as members of the Working Committee. It did not mean that members of the Interim Government should necessarily be members of the Working Committee. Judging by the number of speakers and the vigour of their words, it looked as if all those who opposed the resolution had spoken while those who had not spoken were in favour of the resolution (laughter).

He suggested that the opposition speeches put forward only one main argument, namely, that there was a danger of the Congress losing its revolutionary character by permitting them to take the step proposed in the resolution. That argument, he said, was one which could be advanced against practically any proposition. Constitutionally, the President of the Congress had the right to nominate his Working Committee. By electing a Leader as President, we called upon him to shoulder certain very heavy responsibilities, and Pandit Pant felt the President would be justified in claiming freedom to elect those whom he considered best. Opposition to the resolution meant expression of an intention to prevent him from making the selection according to his choice. That really meant want of confidence in the judgment of the President.

Further, passing of the resolution would not prevent the leaders concerned from choosing to remain in one and not the other organisation. The House had already heard Pandit Nehru state that he felt unable to shoulder the responsibility of Presidentship of the Congress as well as membership of the Interim Government. A similar decision was open to other Congress leaders to take. Top leaders of the Congress had been sent into the Interim Government because the task they were being called upon to perform was a great one and because they wielded immense influence and power in the country. By opposing this resolution, did we wish to limit their influence? These were the men who had brought the Congress to its present high position, and did the House wish to reward them by showing lack of faith in them? Apart from the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Pant continued, the mainstay of the Congress High Command was the presence of leaders like Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and if they were excluded, what would be the position of the High Command? Did they wish to sacrifice the High Command in order to strengthen the Interim Government?

Pandit Pant urged that in the interest of unity of command, it was necessary to ensure that some members of the Interim Government were also in the Working Committee,

Declaring that the Congress leaders now in the Interim Government were the greatest revolutionaries in the country, Pandit Pant contended that it was their exclusion from the Working Committee and not their presence in it that would weaken the revolutionary spirit of the Congress.

PRESIDENT'S REMARK

Before putting the resolution and the amendments to vote, Pandit Nehru, President, made a few observations on the debate, which he thought had been of a high order, and said that the five members of the Congress Working Committee, who were in the Interim Government now, would be ready to resign from either organisation at any time the House wished. He and his four colleagues were in the Interim Government not for personal honour; they were there at the command of Congressmen; in fact, if the choice was left to him and his colleagues, he was sure they would prefer membership of the Congress Working Committee to membership of the Interim Government (Cheers). "Personally, I would like to continue as President of the Congress rather than become a member of the Government". (Renewed Cheers). But, sometimes, they were called upon to do things that gave no personal pleasure but had to be undertaken as a duty.

Referring to Munshi Ahmed Din's contention that Independence could not be achieved without a revolution, Pandit Nehru asked: "If we have not worked for revolution all these twenty-five years, then what have we been doing? Have we been wasting time in a bootless errand? Are we in the Interim Government because of the Viceroy's kindness? We are there by right and by our strength.

"Revolutionaries in other countries followed the method of breaking down the obstacles first and then rebuilding, whereas we in India under Mahatma Gandhi's guidance had succeeded in rebuilding simultaneously with breaking down obstacles. Revolutionaries in other countries, if they failed to break down the obstacles, broke down themselves in the attempt; that danger did not befall us because our movement was built on sounder foundations."

Reiterating that Congress occupied its present position owing to its strength, Pandit Nehru said that by strength he understood action, not speeches.

"I do not know where we all will be after two months", he said. "Will I be in the Secretariat or in the battle field? We have to remain alert at all times. Those who talk of revolution talk as if revolution is to come after a few years. I believe that the age of revolution is right here and now."

He said that the result of the vote on the resolution should not be taken to mean a victory for the one or the other side.

Pandit Nehru explained that the two amendments moved yesterday had one common object, namely, to limit the proportion of members of the Interim Government who could be permitted to remain on the Working Committee. That really amounted to accepting the principle of the resolution and going beyond it. He would, therefore, put to the vote a composite amendment seeking to limit the number of members of the Interim Government who could be members of the Working Committee, without specifying the number for the moment.

The amendment was rejected by an overwhelming majority.

The original resolution was passed by 125 votes to 30.

RESOLUTION ON BALUCHISTAN

The Chair ruled that some of the non-official resolutions on the agenda be referred to the Working Committee. The House agreed without a debate to Khan Abdul Samad Khan's resolution declaring that in view of the changed circumstances and the impending vital constitutional changes, the people of Baluchistan, who so far had no voice in the administration of their province, should be linked with the Government there through a popular Interim Government.

The session ended with the singing of "Vande Mataram" and a vigorous greeting of "Jai Hind" from the President, Pandit Nehru.

Pandit Nehru outlines Foreign Policy

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his first Press Conference at New Delhi on the **26th September** as Minister in charge of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, made a number of announcements on future policy. These were the main points:

In future we shall have a much large number of diplomatic representatives abroad and we shall deal with them direct, instead of through the British Foreign Office. They will have a higher status and will in time be Ambassadors. Direction and advice to them will go from India. A scheme for the formation of an Indian Diplomatic Corps will be placed before the Cabinet soon.

The kernel of India's policy is ending colonialism all over Asia, Africa and elsewhere.

The India Office is bound to be liquidated soon.

The India Government welcomes the proposed formation of a new Government in Burma under Major-General Aung San.

A Godwill Mission is to be sent to the Middle East, and the Interim Government hopes to get Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as leader. For a similar mission to Western and Eastern Europe, Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon is expected to be one of the members.

Pandit Nehru propose to visit the Frontier tribal areas early next month and hopes to have Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan with him. The visit would be preliminary to a fresh examination of the problem of tribal areas, but Pandit Nehru made it clear that there was no intention of depriving the tribes of existing freedom which they had defended so jealously and valiantly.

In practice, the Interim Government recognise the Indonesian Republic. "We have one hundred per cent sympathy with them. We want them to win through and establish their freedom and we want to help and support them in every way."

The Interim Government is considering the question of forming an Advisory Council for Baluchistan drawn from representative institutions and organisations. This will be preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration. Pandit Nehru proposes to visit Ceylon soon. "We have tried and we propose to try our utmost to approach the people of Ceylon and the Government of Ceylon in a friendly manner."

The Commonwealth Relations Department has provided transport for 21,000 Haj pilgrims from India and efforts are continuing for the provision of transport for four or five thousand more.

FREEDOM FOR ALL PEOPLES

"In the sphere of Foreign Affairs, India will follow an independent policy, keeping away from the power politics of groups aligned one against another," said Pandit Nehru. He added that India will uphold the principle of freedom for dependent peoples and will oppose racial discrimination wherever it may occur. She will work with other peaceloving nations for international co-operation and goodwill without exploitation of one nation by another.

Pandit Nehru continued : It is necessary that, with the attainment of her full international status, India should establish contact with all the great nations of the world and that her relations with neighbouring countries in Asia should become still closer. Towards this end it is proposed to despatch a Godwill Mission to the Middle East and to establish contacts, which will in the first intance be informal, with countries of both Western and Eastern Europe. It is also proposed to station an Indian Consul at Bangkok and a Vice-Consul at Saigon in the near future.

So far as her near neighbours are concerned, India will watch with close interest the development of events in Palestine, Iran, Indonesia, China, Siam and Indo-China, as well as in the foreign possessions in India itself, with every sympathy with the aspirations of the peoples of internal peace, freedom (where they lack it) and of their due place in the comity of nations.

"With the U. S. A. and China, India already has a form of diplomatic contact. The relations thus already existing will, it is hoped, shortly be strengthened by the exchange of representations on an independent diplomatic footing.

REPRESENTATION ABROAD

"The first step necessary for India's separate representation abroad is the creation of an Indian Foreign Service to man diplomatic, consular and commercial posts in foreign countries as well as countries in the British Empire. Plans have already been drawn up for the creation of this service and for the recruitment and training of its members, and it is hoped that these will shortly be placed before the Cabinet for approval. The implementation of these plans must, however, take a little time because of the practical issues involved. It is a relatively simple matter to recruit young men to a service, train them and appoint them to junior posts from which they may gradually work their way up. But it is estimated that we shall require over three hundred persons to man posts from the top-most grade down to the lowest, while the number of Indian officials possessing the requisite experience is barely a sixth of that number. Recruitment will, therefore have to be spread over persons in several different age groups, and the experience and qualifications of each candidate will have to be taken into account not only in judging his suitability for the service, but, after selection, in deciding what further training, if any, he should undergo.

"The period of India's separate representation abroad must begin with the best material available and care will be taken to ensure that persons in all walks of life who possess the requisite qualifications are able to offer themselves for selection. The training of the older recruits will necessarily be brief, because they will be required to take up appointments as soon as possible : but it is intended that new recruits should receive instruction in such subjects as economics, world history, international affairs and foreign languages, and to spend a part of their training period at a foreign university. Other matters of detail, such as salaries and allowances, the syllabus of the entrance examination, are still under consideration.

"At present there are Indian Diplomatic officials in the U. S. A. and China, High Commissioners in Australia and South Africa (the last being at present in India), representatives in Burma, Ceylon and Malaya and Trade Commissioners in several countries. With the creation of the new service, the existing posts will be strengthened and new ones opened. It will be necessary to work out a system of priorities, but obviously the first consideration must be given to countries with which we already have contacts and to our neighbours in the East as well as in the West."

ASSURANCE TO FRONTIER TRIBESMEN

Dealing with the North-West Frontier policy, Pandit Nehru said: "The Government propose as soon as practicable to examine in consultation with all the interests concerned, the problem of the tribal areas of the North-West Frontier. The question is one of All-India importance, for the tribes are the guardians of the northern doorway to India and the security and well-being of these areas is, therefore, a definite factor in the defence of this country.

"I should like to make it quite clear that in reviewing the problem there is no intention whatever of depriving the tribes of their existing freedom which they have defended so zealously and valiantly for many years; still less to impose any scheme on them against their will. It follows that the Government's approach to the problem will be essentially a friendly one seeking in co-operation and consultation with the tribes ways and means of solving their economic difficulties, promoting their welfare generally and bringing them into a happy and mutually beneficial association with their neighbours in the settled districts.

"I have said that the question is one of All-India importance. So it is. But there is a wider aspect to it than this. The tribal areas of the North-West Frontier lie along an international frontier—the frontier which divides India from its friendly neighbour, Afganistan. From this situation arises an international obligation, for our friends, the Afgans, look to us to preserve peace and order in the tribal areas in the interests of the tranquillity of their own country. They may rest assured that in seeking a new approach to the problem the fullest regard will be paid to obligations."

Pandit Nehru referred to the application of reforms to Baluchistan. He said: "It will fall to the Constituent Assembly, in consultation with the interests concerned, to decide in what way Baluchistan will enter the new Indian body politic and how the Baluchistan of the future will be administered. But in view of the comparative backwardness of political development in Baluchistan, the Government are already considering the question of forming as soon as practicable an Advisory Council drawn from representative institutions and organisations in Baluchistan to assist the Agent to the Governor-General. This would be a preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration. It is the intention of the Government to consult at every stage the wishes of the inhabitants of Baluchistan and not to ignore such indigenous institutions as the tribal jirgas. It may be necessary in view of local conditions and the wishes of the people there to modify the pattern of democratic institutions which may come into being in the rest of India.

INDIA AND U. N.

Pandit Nehru continued, "Towards the United Nations Organisation, India's attitude is that of whole-hearted co-operation and unreserved adherence, in both spirit and letter, to the Charter governing it. To that end, India will participate fully in its various activities and endeavour to play that role in its councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitle her. In particular, the Indian Delegation will make it clear that India stands for the independence of all colonial and dependent peoples and their full right to self-determination.

"India's Delegation to the forthcoming General Assembly of the United Nations is not yet complete, but invitations to join it have already been accepted by Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Nawab Ali Yawar Jung, Mr. Justice Chagla, Mr. Frank Anthony, Mr. K. P. S. Menon and Mr. R. M. Deshmukh. Attached to the delegation will be a strong and representative body of advisers.

"The most important item on the agenda from India's point of view is the case against South Africa. It is understood that South Africa will contend that the matter is not within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly as it is essentially one of domestic jurisdiction. With this contention the Government of India do not agree. In their view the treatment of Indians in South Africa is fundamentally a moral and human issue which, in view of the 'purposes' and 'principles' so clearly stated in the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly cannot disregard.

"A further important matter will be that of the new international trusteeship system. The Indian Delegation will stress the point that sovereignty everywhere vests in the people of a country. If for any reason immediate independence is not feasible, then India would not object to the territory being placed under United Nations trusteeship for a limited period. The attitude of the delegation will be that all Asians and the people of dependent countries stand together for freedom and for emancipation from foreign control, as this is the only way to bring about world peace and progress.

SOUTH AFRICA ISSUE

"Another item of importance concerns the Union of South Africa's wish to absorb the mandated territory of South-West Africa. This proposition India's Delegation will oppose on a point of principle; the Government of India consider that annexation of mandated territory would be fundamentally opposed to the conception of mandates and trusteeship and that sovereignty resides ultimately in the people of a territory, whose wishes and interests are paramount. The correct course, in their view, would be for South-west Africa to be placed first under the trusteeship of the Trusteeship Council and General Assembly of the United Nations and then to consider its future.

Two items on the agenda have to do with the privilege of veto enjoyed by the five Great Powers in the Security Council or as those countries prefer to term it, 'the rule of Great power unanimity.' The attitude of the Delegation towards this controversial issue will be that, although on principle, India cannot like such an essentially undemocratic provision in the Charter, she attaches the greatest importance to the continuance of Great Power unanimity and co-operation within the framework of the United Nations and would do nothing to prejudice that position.

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

Speaking on the Paris Peace Conference, Pandit Nehru said, "Progress in the conference now in session in Paris to decide terms of peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland has been regrettably but perhaps understandably slow. India's delegation has, wherever possible, followed an independent line of fair compromise, and has supported those proposals which seemed to offer the solution most generally equitable. The delegation has throughout borne clearly in mind the humanitarian aspect of each problem confronting the conference.

"For two reasons India has refrained from presenting a formal claim for reparations from Italy: first, because she had no wish to reduce the amount of reparations available for distribution to countries whose claims may be entitled to priority of consideration, and second, because she preferred not to add to that heavy burden which Italy must carry up the steep hill towards economic recovery. The delegation has, however, reserved the right to utilize Italian assets in India towards liquidating Indian nationals' claims to compensation for damage arising out of the war, and for meeting in part certain other claims.

"India's concern in the future of the ex-Italian colonies in Africa has been made fully apparent. Discussion on this issue ended yesterday, and a position in which India will be consulted before any final decision is taken, is assured.

"As regards the position of Indians in East Africa, the immigration Bills introduced in the Legislatures of three of the East African colonies had caused a great deal of apprehension, both in India and among Indians in those colonies. The delegation headed by Raja Sir Maharaj Singh contacted the people there—Indians, Africans, Europeans and others—and the Government of India was awaiting its report."

NEHRU TO VISIT CEYLON

"Unfortunately there has been for some time past a kind of impasse with regard to our relations with Ceylon", said Pandit Nehru. "Many things have happened there in recent months or years for the matter of that which have agitated Indian opinion a great deal. But we have tried our utmost, and we propose to continue trying, to approach the people of Ceylon and the Ceylon Government in a friendly manner because it is inevitable that the Ceylon and India must pull together in future and we do not want a trace of bad blood between us." Pandit Nehru said that he would make every effort to go to Ceylon but he could not yet say definitely when he would be able to go.

Pandit Nehru welcomed the proposed formation of a new Government in Burma under Maj.-Gen. Aung San. "We welcome it from many points of view, first of all in the hope that this will lead rapidly to the freedom and independence of Burma. And secondly, we not only hope but expect that the relations between our Government and the new Burmese Government will be friendly and cordial", he said.

He expressed gratitude to the new Governor of Burma for the withdrawal of certain trials that were proceeding against Indians there.

Conditions in Malaya were none too good, declared Pandit Nehru. The Mission sent by the Government and the Congress Mission had returned after doing very good work. The Government of India had so far sent Rs. 10 lakhs to give relief to indigent Indians.

HAJ FACILITIES

The External Affairs Department had provided for 2,000 Haj pilgrims from India but 4,000 or 5,000 more people were waiting to go. Since he took charge, additional efforts were made to secure shipping and it was hoped that one more ship which could accommodate 1,200 or 1.500 pilgrims, might be available. Some had also been sent by air. His Department had appealed to the American authorities to supply shipping if they could and they had been good enough to say that they would do their utmost but he did not know whether they would succeed.

Pt. Nehru on Relations with Asian Nations

"Obviously in the future we have to do two things; first to have a much larger number of diplomatic representatives and secondly, to deal with them directly. Naturally, often enough we shall inform His Majesty's Government of what we have done, but the point is that direction and advice will go from here and not from the Foreign Office in London," said *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*, Minister for External Affairs, addressing a Press Conference at New Delhi on the 25th. September.

"We hope fairly soon to have regular diplomatic representatives in some countries, probably beginning with the U. S. and China. We have Agents-General in Nanking and Washington and so we have contacts which we can develop. We can give them a higher status and have direct relations with the Governments. We should like the same type of relations with Russia, but for the moment we have none and we have to explore, investigate and then establish it after consultation with the Soviet Government. We certainly want to develop those relations from every point of view, because, apart from Russia's intrinsic importance in world affairs to-day, the Soviet Union is our neighbour, and it is always desirable to have neighbourly relations with neighbours."

Asked what the status of representatives would be in Nanking and Washington, Pandit Nehru said that the designation had not been finally settled, but it might very well be Ambassador.

The Government of India would informally contact the various countries of Europe, including, of course, France, and find out exactly what kind of representatives they would like to exchange with us. This applied also to Russia and the various countries of Asia. Government intend to send a good-will mission to the Middle Eastern countries—Egypt, Iran, Iraq—not with a view to conveying any special political message of goodwill and friendliness and our desire to have closer relations, diplomatic and cultural. "We hope we shall be able to get Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to lead it," he said. The personnel of the Mission to Europe had not yet been choosen but it was hoped that one of the persons who would help us in this matter would be Mr. Krishna Menon (President of the India League, London).

He did not know whether Mr. Menon would go to Russia. That would depend upon arrangements to be made later.

Asked whether the Government of India intended sending other Indian women to international conferences as they were sending Mrs. Pandit to the UNO General Assembly, Pandit Nehru said: "We will be very glad to send them not only to these international conferences but to appoint them permanently as Ministers and Ambassadors."

HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE IN LONDON

Referring to the High Commissioner's office in London, Pandit Nehru said that so far, it hardly dealt with political matters. It was mainly concerned with pay, pensions and some other odd jobs but obviously in the changed circumstances this office, by whatever name it was called, was likely to be much more important than it had been in the past.

Asked whether he foresaw any contingency in which India's policy would be directly opposed to that of great Britain in international conferences, Pandit Nehru said: "Even in the past to some extent, India has voted against a British proposal. That has happened and it is quite conceivable that many such occasions may arise. Naturally, India in any international conference or elsewhere goes there not to quarrel with people but to get things done as far as possible in their own way. It is not always possible to get one's way in these international conferences and as you see, there are all manner of groupings and pulls in different directions and an issue which seems quite simple is not so simple because the background is very difficult but occasions may arise when India may be opposed to the foreign policy of our country, including England."

Pandit Nehru explained that if the new Government had wanted to change the personnel of the Delegation to the Paris Conference it could certainly have done so, but things being what they were at the Conference, it did not think it worth while in the last stages to make any changes. "But whoever the delegates or representatives are and whatever their previous backgrounds may be, obviously they have to carry out instructions because amendments come up suddenly and in large numbers, and it is not easy to keep peace with them. Then they have to exercise their discretion within the larger instructions sent to them."

APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADORS

Pandit Nehru said that the term of office of those who represented India in various countries had expired or was on the point of expiring and the question of fresh appointments was before Government.

He replied in the affirmative to a question whether the status of diplomatic representatives would be reciprocal. If we sent an Ambassador to Washington or Nanking, they would also send an Ambassador to New Delhi. The Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs had informally indicated to the Government of India that the Australian Government would be happy to raise the status of Australian High Commissioner hereto that of a Minister. Naturally that meant that our representative in Australia would also become a Minister.

Asked whether India would function at international conferences as one bloc with the Commonwealth countries, Pandit Nehru said, "We are not going to function just as a bloc in the sense that we must follow whichever way the bloc goes. We shall confer with them. We shall try to get them round to our vfew-point. When we do not succeed, we shall differ and go our way."

In the past, said Pandit Nehru, the Indian delegates functioned very much like a kind of camp followers of the British Delegation. About fifteen or twenty years ago they were practically appointed by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Government of India or *vice versa*. That practice had been gradually fading off, although it did exist. He believed that it was growing more common at these conferences for the Indian delegates to confer occasionally with representatives from Asian countries, because they felt that Asia had certain interests which they should protect all together. Normally speaking, Asia's representation on international conferences, bodies and commissions was very poor compared to Europe's. Whenever such a matter arose which was an Asian question, they all held together, may be with other countries like Egypt.

SUPPORT TO INDONESIAN REPUBLIC

Pandit Nehru said it was a very well known fact that we were 100 per cent in sympathy with the Indonesian Republic. "We want them to win through and establish their freedom in Indonesia, and we should like to help and support them in every way in their task. We have not recognised the Indonesia, and we should like to help and support them in every way in their task. We have not recognised the Indonesian Republic in the formal sense that nations recognise other nations, but in practice we recognise it".

It was conceivable, he said, that our views in regard to this matter or in regard to Iran were not exactly the same as the British Government's. "Our interests may not be the same. We have no interest in policing other countries' affairs. The British Empire being a very spread-out organism obviously has all manner of interests with which we may not be concerned. In fact we might be apprehensive of being dragged into other people's quarrels. We do not want that to happen. All these matters are in a transitional stage. What we are aiming at is quite clear; what we can or we may do tomorrow is not quite so clear."

Asked to what extent his department would be in a position to work towards the withdrawal of British troops from countries to which the British had sent them, Pandit Nehru said, "We are entirely opposed to policing other countries, and more especially opposed to the use of any Indian resources, men or money, in opposition to the national movement in any other country. We should like to have all our Indian troops back in India, wherever they may be. We have been assured that this process is going on. It seems to us that it has taken longer than it need have done but the principle is admitted that they must come back. For instance, from Indonesia many have come back. A fair number still remain there, but we are told that all of them will be back by the end of November. Apart from the question of shipping whenever the question of troops comes in, one has to deal with complicated and rather static organisms like War Offices."

In passing, Pandit Nehru mentioned that the military authorities in Java did not give proper facilities for the transport of Indonesian rice allocated to India. "We have taken up a very strong line in regard to that matter" he said.

"The kernel of our policy," said Pandit Nehru, "is the ending of colonialism all over Asia, or for what matter in Africa or elsewhere, and racial equality, or, I should say, equality of opportunity for all races, no legal bar, etc. and the end of domination or exploitation of one nation by another."

Replying to another question, Pandit Nehru said that ultimately our representative in London, whether he was called Ambassador or by whatever other designation, would deal with India's relations with England directly. The India Office was bound to be liquidated anyhow. Exactly when it would be liquidated he could not say.

India would follow a very friendly policy towards Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, said Pandit Nehru. In reply to a further question about Nepal he said, "Nepal is an independent country so far as we are concerned. If in future Nepal chooses to have some kind of closer union with India, we shall welcome it."

Questioned whether the appointment of a Minister or Ambassador to China or the U. S. A. would take place in the near future, Pandit Nehru said, "I should say it might well take place within the next two or three months or sooner."

FRONTIER BOMBING

As regards the recent bombing operations in the North-West Frontier, Pandit Nehru said he believed that the North-West Frontier Province Ministry did not know anything about them till about the end of August. When he took charge on September 2 in effect largely the operations had more or less concluded. For the first three or four days, till September 6 or so, he did not know anything about them. "When I heard of this bombing I was terribly worried because it was an urgent and vital matter, but as that ended, we got some leisure to think about it and we are thinking about it and I hope, may be early next month, to pay a short visit to these tribal areas myself to meet the people chiefly concerned, that is, the Governor, the tribal people and the Frontier Provincial Government and then come back here and in consultation with others to lay down some general line of policy which could be discussed by their Cabinet."

Pandit Nehru added: "We shall seek the good offices of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and, in fact, I hope to have him with me."

Pandit Nehru pointed out that the positive policy that we had got to pursue in the tribal areas would also depend on certain external factors like Afganistan, because naturally anything done in the Frontier affected Afghanistan. The matter was very complicated. On the one hand, the people of the Frontier for various reasons, economic or other, sometimes indulged in raids, kidnapping and killing people and this kind of thing could not be tolerated. On the other hand, our approach to the question ought to be as friendly as possible but also as firm as possible. The fundamental thing was that we could not possibly go on just in the way we had been going on. Behind all this, probably, was the economic background if mineral resources were available in the tribal areas—he did not yet know whather they existed—we might devolop them. We might develop hospitals, schools and the rest. He thought that the spending of a large amount of money, as done in the past as some kind of bribe or hush money, was not a good way of producing a right psychology in a people. That money, he would still like to go to these Frontier areas, as without it, there might be a crises but would like it to go in for constructive efforts which would raise their standards, give them new employment.

REFORMS IN BALUCHISTAN

Referring to the Advisory Council suggested for Baluchistan preliminary to the introduction of a fuller democratic system of administration, Pandit Nehru said that he did not know Baluchistan sufficiently, but the three organisations he had heard and therefore suggested were the Anjuman-e-Watan, the Muslim League and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. This course was suggested in view of the fact that it would have taken six or eight months to prepare electoral rolls. "Constitutionally it will be an advisory body, but in practice we hope it will be much more. We cannot suddenly change the constitution," he said.

Referring to the proposed Indian Delegation to the UNO, Pandit Nehru said that originally Government had invited Syed Raza Ali and Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru. Neither of them was able to accept. Later, Mr. Neogy was invited and he accepted, but during the last few days he had informed him that he would be unable to go owing to more or less domestic reasons. "We have to send a maximum of five delegates and a fairly large number of officers, some of whom may be alternate delegates. So, in effect, we have to find possibly one more person as a delegate. We have got two or three persons in view."

As regards foreign possessions in India, Pandit Nehru drew attention to the declaration by the Governor of French India that he would abide by the decision of the inhabitants of French India about their future, and said: "There is no difficulty about French India as far as I can see. There is at present a difficulty about Portuguese India, which I regret to say is in a deplorable condition at the present moment and for some time past. Now obviously this state of affairs cannot continue long in Goa. It is bad for Goa and bad for people round Goa, but for the moment, I am not aware of any Governmental action about to be taken, because obviously although it is a small bit of India, it raises international issue. If an international issue comes in our way we will have to deal with it, but for the present we have so many big problems to deal with, that an issue which might resolve itself need not be raised by us as Government."

The Conservative Conference at Blackpool

While conversations were going on in New Delhi since early in October 1946, between the Viceroy, the Muslim League and the Congress to find avenues for the entry of the Muslim League in the Interim Government, the debate on India provided the Conservative Conference at Blackpool (England) on the 4th October with a dramatic episode when Mr. *Douglas Reed*, one of the Delegates who recently returned from India, where he had been for six years a member of the Madras Legislature, described the Conservative official resolution on India as having a taint of patronage and superiority which took away any effectiveness that it might have. He said that "the Conservative Party to-day hated India."

His speech following one from Earl Winterton and another from Captain Gammons, Member of Parliament was heard in silence. Mr. Reed throwing away his prepared speech said that he knew that he was going to get into trouble for what he had said, but he had to say it.

Former Under-Secretary for India, Mr. *R. A. Butler*, who followed, said that he did not understand or agree with what Mr. Reed had said, but Mr. Butler's opening was almost drowned by the applause the delegates gave Mr. Reed.

Moving a resolution affirming that it was the duty of British Parliament to make sure that in any settlement, the rights of minorities and the States should be effectively safe-guarded and the 'British Mission" in India honourably discharged, *Earl Winterton* said that it was the inescapable duty laid upon British Parliament that they must be prepared not to sacrifice the welfare of the minorities in India. In the official resolution there was no intention of enforcing a policy of divide and rule in India. The only time in the history of India when the country had been united had been when it was under British rule. There must be no dominant united Congress rule. There is a tremendous danger to be avoided—that is, the use of British troops as hired mercenaries in preventing communal conflict in India.

"Why has Pandit Nehru been so silent about the withdrawal of British troops from India? It is because he wants them to be used in quelling communal disturbances —to be used by an Indian Government over which Whitehall had no control?"

"CONGRESS A MINORITY"

Captain Gammons said that under 150 years of British rule in India there had been freedom from outside aggression and from internal anarchy. India had enjoyed three of the four freedoms of the Atlantic Charter—freedom from fear, freedom of speech and freedom of conscience.

"How long is that going to continue when the Union Jack is hauled down at New Delhi?" he asked.

"The settlement arrived at is not a settlement by agreement but achieved by scuttling from our responsibilities. We have not handed power to the majority party in the whole of India.

"We are handing power over to men who were prepared to stab us in the back at a time when we and the Allies, in fact the whole cause of freedom, were in great danger. Captain Gammons added that the Conservatives supported self-government for India if it was based on the will of the Indian people as a whole, but with the necessary safeguards for the great Indian minorities and the Prince.

MR. REED DISAGREES

It was at this stage that Mr. *Reed* was called upon to speak. He began by saying: "I came home from India four months ago and I am in disagreement with what I have heard. I have been 23 years in India and for six as member of legislature. I am proud of my association with the Indian people. This resolution you are asking us to pass will not, as a pious hope, do much harm. It is in keeping with the previous policy which has not been wrong but it has a taint of patronage and superiority which takes away its effectiveness and will offend the great Indian people." When Mr. Reed added: "In India to-day there is great hatred of the Conservative Party," there were cries of dissent.

"That is true," reported Mr. Reed. "That is a fact and, what is more, there is great love for the Labour Party which is held in affection."

Amid growing cries of dissent, Mr. Reed went on: "I tell you, it is true. Whose fault it is, is not for me to say. As a good Conservative I do not like having to say it, but it is my duty also to pay a great tribute to the magnificent work of Lord Wavell and Field Marshal Auchinleck.

Mr. Reed continued: "For the first time in our history we have two great Britons who are trusted by the people of India and who are doing their terrific job grandly." Mr. Reed then dropped the notes from which he was speaking and said: "It is no good, I shall have to tell you what I know. I cannot make a set speech. There is nothing wrong with the Congress Party of India. It stands for liberty and democracy." There was shouts of protest.

"Yes it does," replied Mr. Reed. "I have to tell you these things, whether you like them or not, because they are true. I know these people. I know the tremendous work of the Indian Civil Services. There are only five hundred Europeans there and whatever faults they have, they work like martyrs and we must be very careful in our attitude to realise that this sort of talk, that we have heard here, is not going to do them or us any good.

"It is no good talking like that about what I think and believe, will be a great dominion, and do not forget we made it and is going to be well worthy of us."

He then referred to the official version saying that there were three points in it—the first referring to India being within the British Commonwealth. "I believe they will stay in," he said. "But do not forget what has been said here this morning is not going to help to keep them in and they are free to go their own way and they are going to say to you, We will do what we like." As far as safeguards for the minorities were concerned and negotiations with the Muslim League, he believed they would, in spite of all, be successful.

"I know of another great minority, the Anglo-Indians who with their great leader Mr. Frank Anthony, have done their best to go with us, but have now decided that their future lies with the Indian people.

The sort of resolution I would have liked to have seen this morning is one which does not forget that we owe India 1,000,000,000.

"One does not forget that India is adopting our democratic government, our systems of law, education and medicine and it is a country where life is based on family life. I am proud of what we have done in India and I think our motion should say that we resolve to give every assistance to the people of India as they may desire in working out their own future. They need our help to-day more than ever." For the later part of his speech, Mr. Reed was listened to in silence but the delegates did not restrain their applause for his speech.

Mr. *R. A. Butler* got up immediately to speak on the subject, but his opening phrase was drowned by the clappings for Mr. Reed.

Mr. R. A. Butler said that he could not follow Mr. Reed's argument. He (Mr. Butler) was not responsible for the terms of the resolution. He had constantly advocated self-government for India and had fought for it.

"He proposed to go on with it" whatever Mr. Reed might say.

The Conservatives had a moral position as had the Indian leaders. This had been set out by the last Government. This was that India should have the right to frame its own future destiny on the understanding that the ultimate shape government arrived at represented the main elements in India's national life.

The whole weight of the Conservative Party should be put behind the fulfilment of this objective. He was sorry that the second part of this did not, under the present circumstances, look like being achieved.

He disagreed with Mr. Reed that the Anglo-Indians had turned away from Britain. He had a letter from Mr. Frank Anthony expressing a view entirely opposite to that expressed by Mr. Reed.

Mr. Butler trusted and hoped that the present negotiations with the Muslim League would be successful. Very severe strain had been put on the Muslim League by the handling of recent events.

Mr. Butler continued: They would not get the best in India unless a free and fair government of major minorities and major interests of the country was elected with a full agreement of the Indian States. That was this country's moral obligation. He desired to see the conclusion of this sorry business and the connection between Britain and India established on a more noble and friendly basis than at the present. The solution was adopted with one dissentient.

Churchill Attacks Labour Government's Policy

On the next day, the 5th October, Mr. *Winston Churchill,* former British Prime Minister bitterly assailed the Labour Government's policy towards India, declaring that when the British walked out, the country's unity would be destroyed and millions of "helpless humble Indians" left to face a dark future of misery and bloodshed. Speaking to the last day of the Conservative Conference, Mr. Churchill said that the Socialist Government had given the people of India no choice but to become separated from the British crown union which had for so long shielded them against foreign invasion and internal convulsions.

"The Government of India has been placed—or I should rather say thrust—into the hands of men who have good reason to be bitterly hostile to the British connection but who in no way represent the enormous masses of the peoples of India."

Saying that India is on the verge of calamity, Mr. Churchill prophesied that when India becomes "separate and none too friendly a country to the British Commonwealth, Indian unity would swiftly perish and no one can measure the misery and bloodshed which will overtake these enormous masses of helpless and humble millions."

In a typically Churchillian "passage", he added: "All this is happening every day, every hour, the great ship is sinking in a calm sea. Those who should have devoted their utmost efforts to keep her afloat have instead opened seacocks. This event will long leave its mark in history. It may well be that Burma will suffer the same fate". Yet in spite of this "unparalleled act of voluntary abdication, Britain was ceaselessly abused by the Russians and some unfriendly Americans for being a land-grabbing and imperialist power. The following is the full text of the speech:

"At present we are not, like some of our neighbours on the continent, plunged in fundamental discussions about our constitution. The Government as well as the opposition—Socialists, Conservatives and Liberals—are united against Communism and the Communist party".

"The declared hostility of the Socialists towards communism," he stated, "although it is not at present important in this country, has exercised a significant and salutary influence abroad.

"There was also a considerable measure of agreement on the main lines of foreign policy. This was especially true of Britain's close association with the United States whose firm and unchanged policy in Europe and the abandonment of the doctrines of isolation constitute the main bulwark of peace of the world.

"We should all like also to preserve our wartime friendship with Russian people and with the Soviet Government if they will allow us to do so and will stop, what Mr. Bevin calls, the war of nerves.

"The Socialist Government itself", Mr. Churchill continued, "did not represent the majority of the nation. Under our present electoral system we have the majority of two to one in Parliament and on every occasion they seem to set the party before the country.

"In little more than a year they have diminished British influence abroad and very largely paralysed our revival at home".

Referring to India, Mr. Churchill said: "I am very glad you passed a resolution about India at the conference yesterday. You all know my views about India and how we have desired to give full Dominion Status to India, including the right embodied in the Statute of Westminster for the Indian peoples, like other Dominions, to quit the British Commonwealth of Nations altogether.

"The way in which the Socialist Government have handled this problem has been such as to give the vast masses of the people of India hardly any choice but to become separated from the British Crown, which has so long shielded them from internal convulsions or foreign invasion.

"The Government of India has been placed—or, I should rather say, thrust—into the hands of men who have good reason to be bitterly hostile to the British connection, but who in no way represent the enormous mass of nearly 400,000,000 of all races, estates and peoples of India who have dwelt so long in peace with one another. I hear that a calamity impends upon this sub-continent, which is almost as big as Europe, more populous and even more harshly divided.

"It seems that in quite a short time India will become a separate foreign and none-too-friendly country to the British Commonwealth of Nations. Indian unity, created by British rule, will swiftly perish and no one can measure the misery and bloodshed which will overtake these enormous masses of humble, helpless millions, or under what new power their future and destiny will lie.

"All this is happening every day, every hour. The great ship is sinking in a calm sea. Those who should have devoted their utmost efforts to keep her afloat have instead opened the sea cocks. This event will long leave its mark in history.

"It may well be that Burma will soon suffer the same fate. I am grieved to have to state these sombre tidings to you."

"Most of you will certainly live to see whether I am right or wrong. I may be wrong now. What has been the effect of our immense act of surrender in India?

"On the morrow of our victory and of our services, without which human freedom would not have survived, we are divesting ourselves of the mighty and wonderful empire which had been built up in India by 200 years of effort and sacrifice and the number of the King's subjects is being reduced to barely a quarter of what it has been for generations.

"Yet at this very moment and in the presence of this unparalleled act of voluntary dictation, we are still ceaselessly abused by the Soviet wireless and by certain unfriendly elements in the United States for being a land grabbing imperialist power, seeking for expansion and aggrandisement."

"While Soviet Russia is expanding or seeking to expand in every direction and has already brought many extra scores of millions of people directly or indirectly under the despotic control of the Kremlin and the rigours of Communist discipline, we, who sought nothing from this war but to do our duty and are, in fact, reducing ourselves to a fraction of our former size and population, are successfully held up to world censure.

"It is astonishing that no effective reply should be made by the Government and that it should be left to Field-Marshal Smuts, the great South African, our former valiant enemy of the Boer War days, to raise his voice in vindication of British magnanimity, tolerance and good faith.

"What are we to say to the handling of the Palestine problem by the Socialist Government. At the general elections they made lavish promises to the Zionists and their success at the polls excited passionate expectations throughout the Jewish world. These promises were no sooner made than they were discarded and now all through this year the Government stand vaccillating without any plan or policy, holding on to the mandate in which they have no vital interests, gaining distrust and hostility both of the Arab and the Jew and exposing us to worldwide reprobation for their manifest incapacity.

"Thus both at home and abroad the British nation and the Empire have been deprived of the rewards their conduct deserves. I have naturally considered very carefully what is my duty in these times.

"It would be easy for me to retire gracefully in an odour of civic freedoms and this plan crossed my mind frequently some months ago. I feel now, however, that the situation is so serious and what may have to come, so grave that I am resolved to go on carrying the flag as long as I have the necessary strength and energy and continue to have your confidence.

"It is of the highest importance to our name and endurance as a Great Power and to the cohesion of our national and imperial life that there should be re-established at the earliest possible moment some poise and balance between the political forces in our island, and that those who were so unexpectedly clad with an overwhelming parliamentary power should be made to realise that they are servants and not masters of the British Nation.

"When I think of what has already happened, what is happening and what is going to happen in the next year or two, I feel, as you feel, profoundly stirred.

"Our reaction must not be despair, because that is emotion, which we do not allow. It must be wrath, not despair, and wrath must translate itself not in vain explosives, but in earnest action and well conceived measures and organisation."

Pt. Nehru's Reply to Tories

Pandit Jawaharlalal Nehru issued the following statement from New Delhi on the 6th October 1946 :—

Certain speeches delivered at the British Conservative Party's conferense held at Blackpool indicate a hostile attitude on the part of some leading members of the party towards the Interim Government of India. These speeches are irresponsible, full of malice and calculated to stir up strife and prevent unity and settled Government in India.

A charge has been made that I am silent about the withdrawal of British troops from India and that we seek to use them for quelling communal disturbances. This charge as much else in the speeches delivered at Blackpool, is completely false. We do not want to use them for quelling internal disturbances. It was our policy before we took office and it is our policy now to have British troops withdrawn from India immediately or, at any rate, with the greatest possible speed. We do not want them to stay in India for a day. It is unfair to us and unfair to them here. I invite the leaders of the British Conservative Party to support us in these demands and help in giving effect to them in the immediate future.

While we have expressed our willingness to co-operate with the United Kingdom, I want to make it perfectly clear on behalf of myself and my colleagues in the Government of India that there will be no co-operation with those who adopt an unfriendly attitude towards us or trifle with the independence of India.

Mr. Frank Anthony's Accusation

Refuting the suggestion made by Mr. Butler at the Conservatives' Conference at Blackpool, that the Anglo-Indian community were keeping themselves aloof from other sections of the Indian people, Mr. *Frank Anthony*, the President in Chief of the Anglo-Indian Association released the full text of his letter to Mr. Butler from New Delhi on the **7th October 1946**. Mr. Anthony said:

"I address you with regard to the serious dis-service done to the Anglo-Indian community by the Cabinet Mission and the continuing policy of the British administration, apparently directed to destroy the future of the Anglo-Indians in India.

"In spite of the fact that shortly before the Cabinet Mission arrived in India, the Sapru Committee, consisting of the most eminent Indians, recommended a seat for the Anglo-Indian community in the future Indian Cabinet and also specific representation in a Constituent Assembly, the Cabinet Mission's award only took away from the Anglo-Indians the recognition which we had secured with difficulty from the Indian leaders.

"Our position in India has been made difficult merely because of our past services to the British administration.

We naturally thought, therefore, that British ministers would welcome the recognition which the community had been able to secure from Indian leaders. Instead, the British ministers and the present Viceroy seem to have been inspired by almost deliberately malicious motives in singling out the Anglo-Indian for political and consequent economic extinction.

"The first dis-service which the Cabinet Mission rendered to my community was to exclude us completely from the Constituent Assembly. Thank God, this terrible dis-service has been remedied by the Congress Party which, unlike the British, had good reason to hold that the Anglo-Indians had been hostile. The Congress have enabled us to secure with their votes, two seats in the Constituent Assembly. In addition, I have been returned to the Constituent Assembly exclusively on the votes of the Anglo-Indian M.L.A.s in Bengal.

"The next and crowning dis-service was the deliberate exclusion by the Mission and the Viceroy, of the Anglo-Indian community from the Interim Government. Surprising though it may seem, the Congress had made a request to the Viceroy that an Anglo-Indian should be included in the Interim Government in preference to a Parsi as we are more numerous than the Parsis and the latter had no representation in the Government on previous occasions. The Viceroy, however, saw fit to ignore this recommendation of the major political party and selected Sir N. P. Engineer, although he happened to be a servant of the Crown.

"In the negotiations covering the formation of the present Interim Government, the Congress did everything possible to secure a seat for the Anglo-Indian community. They emphasised the fact that since they had been asked to form the Government, there was no need to adhere to the formula of June 16, namely, six: five: three. They wanted the number increased to 15 in order to include an Anglo-Indian. When this was turned down by the Viceroy, they submitted a list of 14 members which included my name. This also was turned down by the Viceroy. The Congress made it clear that as soon as the Muslim League indicated its willingness to join the Interim Government the formula of six, five, three would be reverted to, and there was, therefore, no point in excluding an Anglo-Indian at this stage, by rigid adherence to this formula.

"History will find it almost impossible to produce a parallel instance where representatives of a particular nation have gone out of their way to destroy a community, fighting for its rights against tremedous odds, for whose existence that nation has been responsible.

"Our bitterness at the deliberate dis-service done to us by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy is steadily increasing. Our task of surviving in the future India has been made a thousand time more difficult by the Cabinet Mission's awards and more particularly by the present Viceroy's insistence on excluding us from a position in the Interim Government. We at least, did not expect this un-warranted betrayal."

Sardar Patel on the Freedom of Press

"The Press must have unfettered freedom in the presentation of news and expression of views, but it also has the obligation to preserve the integrity of the State and support the legitimate activities of a popular Government It must, when the occasion demands, help the Government in defeating the forces of disruption. Negatively, as well as positively, the press should discourage unruly elements," said the Hon'ble *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Home Member and Member of Information and Broadcasting, addressing the Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference at New Delhi on the **13th October.** Following is the full text of the Hon'ble Member's speech :—

I welcome the opportunity you have given me to meet the members of your Committee. Most of you, I am glad to say, are not strangers to me; indeed many among you I count as friends.

I am sorry—as doubtless you all are—that Mr. S. A. Brelvi, one of your former Presidents, is not here with us to-day. He has played a worthy part in enhancing the reputation of your profession and in building up the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference. I am sure you will join me in wishing him a complete and speedy recovery.

You would naturally like me, on this occasion, to refer to the relationship between the Press and the Interim Government. I may at once say that the Interim Government is most anxious to have the co-operation of the Press in the difficult task that lies ahead of us. We shall scrupulously respect the freedom of the Press, in fact, we shall help it to exercise its legitimate functions; and we have every confidence that the Press, for its part, will assist us in administering the affairs of the country during the strenuous times through which we are passing because of the change-over from the foreign rule to independence. It will be your responsibility to guide and reflect the public opinion during this formative period. I am sure you will discharge it with credit to your calling and benefit to our motherland.

CHAIN OF RESTRICTIONS

The All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference was born at a time and in circumstances which to-day are only a bitter memory. Faced with an unprecedented invasion on the liberty of the Press by a regime, which, in the name of war, forged an unending chain of restrictions, you got together in 1940 to protect your rights. Intent on suppressing the freedom movement, the Government of the day strove to prevent publicity about the struggle and even about the sufferings and sacrifice of the people. I need not recall the specific instances; they must be fresh in your minds. The press resisted, I suppose as well as it could, these inroads into its rights.

But all that is now history. Today the situation has radically changed. Foreign rule is about to end. There is now at the Centre a Government which is the forerunner of the fully independent State which we shall soon fashion. You will, therefore, naturally find yourselves in tune with the new set-up and I know you will extend to the Government your unstinted co-operation and support in carrying out the task of achieving complete independence without delay.

As one in charge of the Information Department, I look forward to mutually benefical association with you. I am also responsible for Home affairs. As you are aware, anti-social elements are plying their nefarious trade in certain areas of the country. It is the primary duty of every Government to protect the life and property of the citizen. Our International political and other differences must be solved not by force or violence but by negotiation and persuasion or, in the last resort, by arbitration. The Press has great and worthy part to play in driving this maxim home to the people.

The Press must have not only unfettered freedom in the presentation of news paper and expression of views, but it also has the obligation to preserve the integrity of the State and support the legitimate activities of a popular Government. It must, when occasion demands, help the Government in defeating the forces of disruption. Negatively as well as positively, the press should discourage unruly elements.

When feelings run high and tempers are frayed, it is the duty of every responsible person to desist from saying or doing things which are likely to inflame passions. Incitements to violence will, of course, not be tolerated. But there are other forms of writing containing veiled incitement which do great harm. I do hope and trust you will avoid both.

I understand that recently the Central Press Advisory Committee formulated certain suggestions for the guidance of the Press in respect of news and comments on communal disturbances. These are:—

1. During riots reports should not contain anything to indicate the community of either victims or assailants.

2. While every endeavour should be made to ensure that reports are factually correct and are received from sources known to be reliable, such reports as give details of defiance of the law or are calculated to inflame public feelings or to create communal hatred should be treated with the greatest circumspection.

3. Reports of speeches, statements or news directly inciting people to violence should be avoided.

4. Care should be taken in editorials to avoid expressions calculated to encourage or condone violence or to arouse communal bitterness.

I am not sure that these suggestions fully meet the requirements of the situation, but they are, I think, a step in the right direction, constituting as they do a healthy guide to the Press.

I notice that you have as an item on your agenda the suggestions that the Government should set up a machinery for revision of the Press Laws in the country with a view to bringing them in line with the Press Laws of other free countries. I do not propose to anticipate your discussion. This much I may say on behalf of the Government, that they will have no objection to setting up a committee of officials and non-officials, including representatives of the Press, with a view to examining the repeal or modification of the laws now in force.

As I said in my opening remarks, I am happy to meet you. You have, I expect, a heavy agenda to go through. Any resolutions you put forward will receive our careful and active consideration. The administration of the Press Laws is, as you know, a provincial subject; but there is unlimited scope for co-operation between the Interim Government and the Press in helping to build a new India. I have every hope that the Government and the Press will work hand in hand in that nation-building task.

Muslim League Enters Interim Govt.

On the **15th October 1946**, the following Press Communique was issued:—

The Muslim League have decided to join the Interim Government and his Majesty the King has been pleased to appoint the following to be members of the Interim Government:

Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan
Mr. I. I. Chundrigar
Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar
Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan
Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal

In order to make it possible to re-form the Cabinet, the following members have tendered their resignations:—Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer.

The members of the present Cabinet who will continue to serve are the following:—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Asaf Ali, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. John Mathai, Sardar Baladev Singh, Mr. Jagjivan Ram and Mr. Cooverji Hormusji Bhabha.

The distribution of portfolios will be settled early next week and the new members will then be sworn in. Meanwhile H. E. the Viceroy has asked the resigning members to continue in charge of their portfolios.

The Nehru-Jinnah Correspondence

Disclosure in formal correspondence that Mahatma Gandhi agreed to a formula which permitted the Muslim League to claim that it was the sole representative of Muslims in India was made from New Delhi on the **16th October** by Mr. *Mohammed Ali Jinnah,* President of the Muslim League, said an A. P. A, message.

The correspondence disclosed also that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other members of the Interim Cabinet refused to consider this proposition aa binding upon them because it restricted the right of the Congress to speak for those Indian Muslims who did not follow the Muslim League leadership.

Release of the correspondence came as an anti-climax to the days of negotiations which ended with the League's announcement that it was coming into the Government without any agreement with the Congressmen on how to proceed after the new Government was formed.

There was little in the correspondence that had not become known to the public during the negotiations. First, Mr. Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi had their conversation at which, according to the correspondence, they agreed on the following formula :

"The Congress does not challenge and accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative body of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles, they alone have today an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restrictions or limitation should be put upon the Congress to choose such representatives as they think proper from among the members of the Congress as their representatives."

To Congress leaders it represented such a dramatic departure from their long-held position that they could not accept it, even though the much loved Mahatma had agreed to it.

"We feel that the formula is not happily worded," Pandit Nehru wrote to Mr. Jinnah on October 6. "We are willing, as a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative organisation of an overwhelming majority of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles they have to-day the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as an authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitations to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organisation may stand on its merits."

The Mahatma later had stated at a prayer meeting that he had been guilty of acting without closely reading it.

As to the Muslim League, it appeared to have shown its disagreement with Pandit Nehru's proposition by appointing a scheduled caste representative.

The correspondence disclosed the determination of Pt. Nehru and his associates to establish a responsible Cabinet wherein all problems are solved by the Cabinet itself and not by reference to the Viceroy or to the Federal Court.

It disclosed the equal determination of Mr. Jinnah to prevent anything arising which would prejudice his intention of achieving Pakistan.

Jinnah's Terms for Settlement

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, issued the following statement to the Press on the 16th. October :—

"There has been considerable speculation indulged in by the Press and varying incorrect accounts are being given, about the negotiations between the Congress and the Muslim League and with regard to the termination of those discussions. It was, therefore, agreed between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and me that, in order to put the true facts before the public, the correspondence that has passed between us should be released and accordingly, I am doing so."

Confidential letter from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Mr. M. A. Jinnah dated October 6, 1946 :

I have consulted some of my colleagues about the matter discussed by us yesterday and over the possibility of a rapprochment between the Muslim League and the Congress. We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than these two organisations should meet again as before as friends, having no mental reservations and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign Power. We would, therefore, welcome the decision of the League to join the Interim Government for it to work as a united team on behalf of India as a whole.

The points put forward by you in our conversation yesterday were :—(1) The formula suggested to you by Gandhiji. (2) The League not being responsible for the members at present representing the Scheduled Castes and the minorities. (3) What should be done in case any vacancy should arise among the members representing the minorities other than the Scheduled Castes, (4) The procedure to be adopted over what may be called major communal issues, and (5) alternating Vice-Presidentship.

Congress Objections to Formula

Regarding No. 1, we feel that the formula is not happily worded. We do not question the purpose underlying it. We are willing, as a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative representative organisation of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles, they have to-day the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons, the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitation to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organisation may stand on its merits.

Regarding No. 2, I am to say that the question of the League being responsible does not arise and, as you do not raise any objections to the present constitution of the Government in this respect, there is no question to be solved.

Regarding No. 3, I am to say that if any such vacancy arises, the whole Cabinet will consider what should be done to replace the vacancy and advise the Viceroy accordingly. There can be no question of right in the matter of consultation with the League in regard to the representation of these minorities.

Regarding No. 4, your suggestion about the Federal Court is not feasible. Matters coming before the Cabinet cannot be made subject matter of references to court. We should thrash out all such matters amongst ourselves and bring up agreed proposals before the Cabinet. In the event of failure to reach an agreed decision, we should seek the method of arbitration of our own choice. We hope, however, that we will act with such mutual trust, forbearance and friendliness that there will be no occasion to go to such arbitration.

Regarding No. 5, it is out of the question to have any rotation in the Vice-Presidentship. We have no objection if you desire to have an additional Vice-Chairman for the Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet, who can also preside at such committee meetings from time to time.

I am hoping that if your Committee finally decide upon the League joining the National Cabinet, they will also decide simultaneously to join the Constituent Assembly, or recommend to your Council to this effect.

I need hardly mention that when an agreement has been reached by us, it can only be carried by mutual agreement and not otherwise.

League Leader's Attitude

Letter from Mr. M. A. Jinnah to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dated October 7, 1946 :—

I am in receipt of your letter of October 6 1946, and I thank you for it: I appreciate and reciprocate your sentiments expressed in Paragraph 1 of your letter.

With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, Point No. 1 of the formula, it was accepted by Mr. Gandhi and me and the meeting between us was arranged on that basis in order to negotiate and settle a few other points remaining for the purpose of reconstituting the Interim Government. The formula runs as follows :

The Congress does not challenge but accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have to-day an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restriction of limitation should be put upon the Con-

gress to choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress as their representatives.

And now in your letter under reply, not only you have made changes in it but you consider no formula is necessary! I regret I cannot agree to any change in the language or otherwise, as it was the agreed basis of our discussion on other points; nor can I agree with you that no formula is necessary. It was signed by Mr. Gandhi and accepted by me.

As the whole basis of our talk on other matters was the formula agreed to by Mr. Gandhi, I do not think we can make any further progress unless it is accepted by you as a basis upon which we can proceed to discuss other points we have already discussed orally in the course of our conversation, and now I am enclosing herewith a copy of the various points put by me before you in writing.

Even the four points, excluding Point No. 1 regarding the formula which I have already dealt with above, you do not agree with any one of them. I am still willing on the basis of the formula being accepted by you, to further discuss the various points with a view to settle them in the spirit of the sentiments expressed by you in Paragraph 1. I am anxious that we should come to our own settlement without undue delay.

1. The total number of the members of the Executive Council to be 14.
2. Six nominees of the Congress will include the Scheduled Castes representatives but it must not be taken that the Muslim League has agreed to or approves of, the selection of the Scheduled Castes representative, the ultimate responsibility in that behalf being with the Governor-General and Viceroy.
3. That the Congress should not include in the remaining five members of their quota a Muslim of their choice.
4. Safeguard: That there should be a convention that on major communal issues, if the majority of Hindu or Muslim members of the Executive Council are opposed, then no decision should be taken.
5. Alternative or rotational Vice-President should be appointed in fairness to both the major communities as it was adopted in the U. N. O. Conference.
6. The Muslim League was not consulted in the selection of the three majority representatives, i.e., Sikh, Indian Christian and Parsi. And it should not be taken that the Muslim League approves of the selection that has been made. But in future, in the event of there being a vacancy owing to death, resignation or otherwise, representatives of these minorities should be chosen in consultation with the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.
7. Portfolios: The most important portfolios should be equally distributed between the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.
8. That the above arrangements should not be changed or modified unless both the major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress—agree.
9. The question of the settlement of the long-term plan should stand over until a better and more conducive atmosphore is created and an agreement has been reached on the points stated above and after the Interim Government has been re-formed and finally set up.

CONGRESS' RIGHT TO APPOINT MUSLIM

Letter from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Mr. Jinnah dated October 8, 1946:

I received your letter of October 7 as I was going to Baroda House to meet you there last evening. I hurriedly glanced through it and was perturbed by it as it seemed to me to be at variance with the spirit of our talk the previous day. Subsequently we discussed various points and unfortunately could not convince each other.

On my return I read through your letter more carefully and consulted some of my colleagues. They were also disturbed not only by the letter but also by the list of points attached to it. This list had not been seen or considered by us previously. It had little relevance after our talk.

We have again given earnest consideration to the whole matter and we feel that we cannot state our position more clearly than I did in my letter to you of October 6, except for some variations which I shall indicate below. I shall therefore, refer you to that letter of mine which represents our general and specific viewpoint.

As I have told you, my colleagues and I did not accept the formula agreed to by Gandhiji and you. The meeting between you and me was not arranged, so far as I was aware, on the agreed basis of that formula. We knew of it and were prepared to agree to the substance of the formula as stated to you in my letter of October 6. That formula contained a further paragraph which you have not quoted in your letter: "It is understood that all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case."

While we still think that the formula is not happily worded, we are prepared, for the sake of the settlement we so earnestly desire, to accept the whole of it, including the paragraph left out in your letter.

In that case you will agree, I hope, that we should make our further position quite clear. It is clearly understood of course, that the Congress has the right to appoint a Muslim out of its quota. Further, as I have stated in my previous letter, the Congress position in regard to the Nationalist Muslims and the smaller minorities should not be challenged by you.

In regard to the points numbered 2, 3 and 4 in my letter of October 6, I have stated our position and have nothing further to add. We have gone as far as we could to meet you and we are unable to go further. I trust that you will appreciate the position.

Regarding No. 5 (the question of the Vice-President) you made a suggestion yesterday that the Vice-President and the leader of the House (the Central Assembly) should not be the same person. In present circumstances this means that the Leader of the House should be a Muslim League member of the Cabinet. We shall agree to this.

I am writing this letter to you after full and careful consideration of all the issues involved and after consulting such of my colleagues as are here. It is in no spirit of carrying on an argument that I have written but rather to indicate to you our earnest desire to come to an agreement. We have discussed these matters sufficiently and the time has come for us to decide finally.

JINNAH'S OPPOSITION TO CHANGE IN FORMULA

Letter from Mr. M A. Jinnah to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dated October 12, 1946 :—

I received your letter dated October 8, 1946, yesterday in reply to my letter of October 7, 1946.

I regret that you and your colleagues do not accept the formula agreed to by Mr. Gandhi and me. Mr. Gandhi and I had also agreed that on that basis you and I should meet in order to negotiate and settle a few other points that remained for the purpose of reconstituting the Interim Government. Accordingly arrangements were made for our meeting on October 5.

I am surprised to gather from your letter, when you say that the meeting was not arranged so far as you were aware on the agreed basis of that formula. The only formula agreed upon between Mr. Gandhi and me was that which was mentioned in my letter of October 7, 1946. I had not mentioned in my letter, what is referred to by you as Paragraph 2 as that was one of the points among others to be further examined and discussed by you and me. This arrangement was actually put on record.

At our first meeting on October 5, we discussed all the points and you informed me that you will let me know the time that will suit you to meet me the next day, but, instead of that, I received your letter of October 6, 1946. In this letter you yourself referred to the formula as one mentioned in my letter of October 7 and expressed your view that the formula was not happily worded and suggested a modification by inserting a proviso as follows: "Provided that for identical reasons, the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress."

Or else, if that was not agreed to, you suggested no formula was necessary. There is no reference in your letter to what you describe as Paragraph 2 as part of the agreed formula and you yourself dealt with that point quite separately in the opening paragraph of your letter which runs at follows :—

"We are all agreed that nothing would be happier and better for the country than that these two organisations should meet again as before as friends, having no mental reservations, by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other Foreign Power."

That, in substance, was the idea of the Paragraph 2, mentioned by you, which among other matters was to be examined and discussed. I also referred to this matter in my reply stating that I appreciated and reciprocated the sentiments expressed in Paragraph 1 of your letter of October 6, 1946.

I fail to understand why you and your colleagues should have been disturbed not only by my letter of October 7, but also by the list of points attached to it. There was nothing new in that list of points which we had not discussed the first day, as it is clear from your letter of October 6, wherein you yourself have dealt with every one of the points mentioned in the list that I sent to you. Let me take one by one the points in the list sent to you in writing:

(1) Total number of 14: That was not in dispute.

(2) The Scheduled Castes representative: That the League must not be taken to have agreed or approved of the selection, which is referred to in Paragraph 2 of your letter.

(3) Nomination of Muslim in Congress quota: The matter was discussed.

(4) Safeguard: That was discussed as is clear from point 4 in your letter.

(5) Alternative or rotational Vice-President: Was discussed and is referred as Point No. 5 in your letter.

(6) Vacancies occurring in the seats allotted to minority representatives: This matter was discussed and is referred to by you in your letter, Point No. 3.

(7) Portfolios: The matter was discussed.

(8) No change in the arrangements agreed to without the consent of both the major parties: This was discussed and is referred to in the last paragraph of your letter.

(9) The long-term questions: This was discussed and is mentioned in your letter, last but one paragraph.

All these points were discussed as is clear from what I have pointed out above and the list was sent to you merely as a matter of convenience and preciseness.

You state in your letter under reply that your position is the same with regard to the various matter that were discussed between us as is mentioned in your letter of October 6 except for some variations which you have indicated in your letter.

Following are the variations and my reaction to them:

(1) That you would accept the formula provided Paragraph 2 is included in the formula and is made a part of it. This constitute a fundamental departure from the original formula upon the basis of which I had agreed to have discussions with you. I cannot agree to this variation.

(2) Provided that the Muslim League does not challenge that the Congress represents the minorities and the 'Nationalist Muslims' as indicated in terms of your previous letter of October 6 and referred to in your letter under reply.

This again is a serious departure from the agreed formula. Besides, this is a matter for the minorities concerned.

I note what you say with regard to Points 2, 3 and 4 of your letter of October 6, i.e. Scheduled Castes representative and other minorities; the position about the vacancies occurring in future in the seats allotted to the minorities and the procedure to be adopted with regard to major communal issues. Even with regard to these points there is no agreement between us.

With regard to Point No. 5 about Vice-Presidentship. I note what you say.

Since you have stated your position after full and careful consideration of all the issues involved and after consultation with your colleagues, I presume that it follows that this is your final stand. I deeply regret that we have failed to come to an honourable agreement of our own, satisfactory to both the parties.

Letter from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to Mr. M. A. Jinnah dated October 13, 1946 :—

I thank you for your letter of October 12. In this letter there are a number of mis-statements. What you have said does not fit in with my recollection of our conversations or what has taken place during the past few days. I need not, however, go into this matter now as I have been informed by the Viceroy that the Muslim League have agreed to nominate five persons on their behalf as members of the Interim Government.

League Members Take Office

On the 25th October, the following Press Communique was issued from the Viceroy's House:—

The portfolios to be held by the representatives of the Muslim League who have recently been appointed Members of the Interim Government have been allotted by His Excellency the Governor-General as follows :—

Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan (Finance).
Mr. I. I. Chundrigar (Commerce).
Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar (Communications, Post and Air).
Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan (Health).
Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal (Legislative).

Consequent changes among the other portfolios are as follows :—

Dr. John Matthai (Industries and Supplies).
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari (Education and Arts).
Mr. Bhabha (Works, Mines and Power).

The other portfolios remain as before, i. e., Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations).

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (Home and Information and Broadcasting).
Dr. Rajendra Prasad (Food and Agriculture).
Mr. Asaf Ali (Transport and Railways).
Sardar Baldev Singh (Defence).
Mr. Jagjivan Ram (Labour).

The Associated Press of India said: The settlement now announced is believed to have been made possible mainly by the assurance—conveyed through the Viceroy—that the League's entry is actuated by a spirit of co-operation and the will to work in harmony and that the League has accepted the long-term proposal, with particular reference to participation in the Constituent Assembly.

League to fight for Pakistan in Interim Government

Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan's Views

Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Member-Designate of the Interim Government, addressing the Islamia College Students at Lahore on the 19th October declared: "We are going into the Interim Government to get a foothold to fight for our cherished goal of Pakistan, and I assure you that we shall achieve Pakistan." He added: "The disturbances which have occurred in many parts of the country after the installation of the purely Congress Government at the Centre have established the fact beyond any shadow of doubt that the ten crores of Indian Muslims will not submit to any Government which does not include their true representatives.

In the Interim Government, he said, all our activities shall be guided by two considerations, that is, to convince the Congress that no Government in India can function smoothly without the co-operation of the Muslim League and that the League is the sole representative organisation of the Indian Muslims. The Interim Government is one of the fronts of the direct action campaign and we shall most scrupulously carry out the orders of Mr. Jinnah on any front that we are called upon to serve.

Mr. Gazanfar Ali Khan said: "The Congress out of spite for the Muslim League consented to play in the hands of the British Government and helped to strengthen the hold of British imperialism in India. But the inefficiency and lack of statesmanship of the Congress interim Government was soon exposed.

"There can be no peace and no progress in India, without a settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan."

Liaqat Ali Explains League Policy in Interim Government

Mr. *Liaqat Ali Khan*, League Member of the Interim Government, at a Press Conference at New Delhi on the 26th October attended by his three colleagues (Messrs. Nishtar, Chundrigar and Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Mr. Mandal being still away in East Bengal), explained the Muslim League's intentions and ideals in entering the Interim Government.

Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan said: "We are aware of the great responsibility which we have undertaken and I can assure you that it is not with a light heart that we have decided to enter the Interim Government. The Muslim League has decided to enter the Interim Government in the interests of Muslim India and the peoples of this vast sub-continent."

India, Mr. Liaqat Ali said, was not a nation : it was a land of nationalities. "Unless you have a Government which has in it the representatives of all the nationalities that inhabit this vast sub-continent, you cannot have either peace or goodwill among the peoples of India. In India, to my mind, it is not possible nor is it advisable to have a one-party Government. No Government, especially at this time when there are so many serious problems which we have to face, can takle successfully these problems unless it can claim to represent all the nationalities of the country." Referring to Press reports that the League had entered the Government after giving assurances and undertakings, Mr. Liaqat ali said: "We are a responsible organisation. We know what our duty is and there is no question of giving any assurance to anybody. We have entered this Government to look after the interests of the peoples of this land of ours. We know what our responsibility is and we know how to discharge that responsibility. I want to make it clear that it is our intention and determination to work in harmony with our colleagues in the Executive Council. We have no desire that this Government should become an arena of strife. We have enough strife outside in the country and we want that that strife outside should end. We want that there should be peace in the country; we want that all this illwill which exists to-day should disappear. I do not think that there is any Indian who can be proud of what is happening throughout the length and breadth of India during the last few months.

"We feel that our entry into the Government may establish, and we hope it will establish, a peaceful atmosphere outside. India needs a peaceful atmosphere more to-day than it ever did, because there are so many problems which have sprung up, problems that always follow in the wake of war which have got to be dealt with" Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan went on: "It will be the determined effort of my colleagues and myself of the Muslim League, it will be our first duty, to take steps to ameliorate the condition of the masses, whose interests have been criminally ignored in the past. Every action that we take, every policy that we follow, will have that background, will have that desire of improving the lot of the man in the street.

Financial Policy of New Government

"With regard to my particular portfolio of Finance, the policy which I shall follow will be not to make the rich richer and the poor poorer but to bring down the rich and raise up the poor."

The future of India, he believed, could only be secured if there was complete freedom for the two major nations, the Hindus and Muslims, and complete security and justice guaranteed to the minorities in this land. "Whatever shape or form the future constitution of India may take, if it is not based on this fundamental principle, I fear that our troubles will not be over. Our troubles can only be over when every nationality feels that it is free to develop itself in accordance with its own ideals, its own culture, its own ideology. We can only have peace when every minority can feel that its interests are safe and secure and the future rule of India is not based on numbers but is based on equity, justice and fairplay." Mr. Liaqat Ali went on: "This Government has been formed under the present constitution and as such there is no such thing as joint or collective responsibility. But at the same time it should be the desire and determination of every member of the Government to work in harmony and in co-operation for the good of the man in the street. We should work not for the purpose of our party gains or party losses but for the good of the general mass of the people and I feel that if all the Members of the Government who are responsible for their own Departments work in that spirit of co-operation and harmony, this Government should be able to achieve substantial success. This is indeed a novel experiment which we are trying here. Nowhere in the world does a Government like the present Interim Government of India exist and I hope it will succeed."

Intention to Work in Harmony"

Mr. Liaqat Ali had several times been asked by his friends whether this Government would be able to function in a proper atmosphere. "My reply to that is: We have come into the Government with the intention of working in harmony with our other colleagues. But as you know, you cannot clap with one hand. The success or failure of this Government will depend on its various component parts. Let us hope in the interest of this country which is dear to every one of us, that this experiment which we are trying wil prove successful." The Muslim League, said Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, was desirous of the Independence of India and freedom of its peoples as much as anybody else. "I challenge, I deny, that one particular party has a monopoly of patriotism. We are as anxious, as keen and as desirous as anybody else of having complete Independence and freedom, and doing away with foreign domination at the earliest possible moment. Referring to the Commerce portfolio allotted to Mr. Chundrigar which indirectly affected his own Department, Mr. Liaqat ali Khan said : "As far as our relations with the outside world are concerned, every policy that we follow will be for establishing friendly contacts with all countries. We shall adopt policies which will establish economic and cultural co-operation between the various nations of the world. We feel that the world is large enough to find a place for every nation.

"We feel that if there were more co-operation and more friendly relations and less exploitation by the West of the East, the world will be a happier one. I would like to take this opportunity of appealing to the Western Countries that they have exploited the East enough. The East is awake now and if they want to avoid all the carnage that has taken place during the last two world wars, they must give up this policy of exploitation of weaker countries. They must adopt a policy of friendly co-operation ; they must adopt a policy of economic co-operation as equal partners and on an equal footing."

QUESTION OF EQUALITY OF TREATMENT FOR ALL

There were some people who believed that everyone should be treated equally, that every community should have equal treatment and no favours. He did not subscribe to this view. "I feel that those communities or those elements which are in a weaker position are not only deserving but it is their right to have a better treatment so that you could bring them up to the level of the other communities or elements in the country which are economically, socially and educationally more advanced. It may sound and read very well on paper to say that everybody must be treated equally. I say that no injustice should be done to anybody but those elements in the country which are weak and depressed must be raised up to a higher level and therefore they are deserving of special consideration and more favourable treatment. It is a very heavy burden which we have undertaken and we hope that we shall not disappoint our people who have sent us to this Interim Government. We hope that we will be able to do something during our tenure of office. I cannot say how long it will last. We hope that we will be able to do something which will really ameliorate the condition of the masses, really establish peace in the country and better understanding and goodwill among the various nationalities of this land."

Asked why he had not mentioned the demand for Pakistan in his speech, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan said: "In my speech I have defined what Pakistan is. Pakistan is a concise name for what I have placed before you just now. Pakistan means freedom both for Hindus and Muslims and security and justice for the minorities. As long as we believe in the real independence of India in orderly progress and peace and tranquillity in this land we cannot give up Pakistan."

Questions relating to the joint responsibility of the members of the Interim Government and the nomination of Mr. J. N. Mandal as the League's nominee were answered by Mr. Liaqat Ali.

One correspondent asked: On the one hand you desire co-operation and on the other you shirk joint responsibility, which is another name for co-operation as against the Viceroy's veto. How would you reconcile this ?

Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan : Joint and collective responsibility is a constitutional law and practice. There is under the present Government of India Act no such thing as collective or joint responsibility. I have said that we want to work in harmony and co-operation with other colleagues and at the same time, I have explained the constitutional position. I may tell my friend that I am willing to co-operate with him but co-operation does not mean that if my friend wants to drown himself in the sea, I am going to follow him there (laughter).

Q : If someone tries to push me down into the water, will you stand by me ?

A : As a human being I will pull you out (more laughter).

Q : Does this mean that you do not accept the leadership of Pandit Nehru ?

A : As I said, the Government has been formed under the present constitution. There is no such thing as leadership of the Government by one individual. In the Government there are nominees of the two major parties—the Congress and the Muslim League—and the representatives of the three minorities—the Sikhs, Indian Christians and the Parsis. The Congress Party have a leader of their own. That means that the Congress Bloc in the Government have a leader of their own. As regards the Vice-Presidentship of the Executive Council, the Vice-President's function as laid down in the constitution is to preside at meetings of the Council in the absence of the Governor-General. He enjoys no other privileges which other members of the Government do not. We are colleagues in a common enterprise to advance the good of the people of India.

Replying to another question, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan said: "We believe in industrialisation of the country not for the good of a few capitalists but for the good of the peoples of India.

Asked whether Mr. Jogendranath Mandal's nomination was a departure from the League's policy, he said: "The League has always championed the cause of not only the Musalmans but all the down-trodden peoples of this country."

Q: Does the League's entry into the Government imply that it will come into the Constituent Assembly.

A: I can only answer that question as Secretary of the League and I am not addressing this Press Conference in that capacity.

Jinnah-Viceroy Correspondence

The correspondence which passed between the Viceroy and Mr. Jinnah and which led to the participation of the Muslim League in the Interim Government was released from New Delhi on the **28th October.**

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in his letter to H. E. the Viceroy, dated October 3, 1946 says :

Dear Lord Wavell—At the end of our last interview on October 2, 1946, it was agreed that I should finally put before you the various proposals that emerged out of our discussions, for your consideration and reply. Accordingly, I am enclosing herewith the various proposals that have been formulated by me.

Enclosure :

1. The total number of the members of the Executive Council to be fourteen.
2. Six nominees of the Congress will include one Scheduled Castes representative, but it must not be taken that the Muslim League has agreed to, or approves of, the election of Scheduled Castes' representative, the ultimate responsibility in that behalf being with the Governor-General and the Viceroy.
3. That the Congress should not include in the remaining five members of their quota a Muslim of their choice.
4. Safeguard : That there should be a Convention that on major communal issues, if the majority of Hindu or Muslim members of the Executive Council are opposed, then no decision would be taken.
5. Alternative or rotational Vice-President should be appointed in fairness to both the major communities as it was adopted in the UNO Conferences.
6. The Muslim League was not consulted in the selection of the three minority representatives, i.e., Sikh, Indian Christian and Parsi, and it should not be taken that the Muslim League approves of the selection that has been made. But in future, in the event of there being a vacancy owing to death, resignation or otherwise, representatives of these minorities should be chosen in consultation with the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.
7. Portfolios : The most important portfolios should be equally distributed between the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.
8. That the above arrangement should not be changed or modified unless both the major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress—agree.
9. The question of the settlement of the long-term plan should stand over until a better and more conducive atmosphere is created and an agreement has been reached on the points stated after the Interim Government has been reformed and finally set up.

VICEROY'S REPLY

H. E. the Viceroy, in his letter to Mr. Jinnah, dated October, 4, 1946 says:

Dear Mr. Jinnah—Thank you for your letter dated yesterday. My replies to your nine points are as follows:

1. This agreed.
2. I note what you say and accept that the responsibility is mine.
3. I am unable to agree to this. Each party must be equally free to nominate its own representatives.
4. In a Coalition Government it is impossible to decide major matter of policy when one of the main parties to the Coalition is strongly against a course of action proposed. My present colleagues and I are agreed that it would be fatal to allow major communal issues to be decided by vote in the Cabinet. The efficiency and prestige of the Interim Government will depend on ensuring that differences are resolved in advance of Cabinet meetings by friendly discussions. A Coalition Government either works by a process of mutual adjustments or does not work at all.

5. The arrangement of alternative or rotational Vice-Presidents would present practical difficulty and I do not consider it feasible. I will however arrange to nominate a Muslim League member to preside over the Cabinet in the event of the Governor-General and Vice-President being absent.

I will also nominate a Muslim League Member as a Vice-Chairman of the Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet, which is a most important post. I am Chairman of this Committee and in the past have presided almost invariably, but I shall probably do so only on special occasions in future.

6. I accept that both major parties would be consulted before filling a vacancy in any of these three seats.

7. In the present conditions all the portfolios in the Cabinet are of great importance and it is a matter of opinion which are the most important. The minority representatives cannot be excluded from a share of the major portfolios and it would also be suitable to continue Mr. Jagjivan Ram in the labour portfolio. But subject to this, there can be equal distribution of the most important portfolios between the Congress and the Muslim League. Details would be a matter for negotiation.

8. I agree.

9. Since the basis for participation in the Cabinet is of course acceptance of the Statement of the 16th May, I assume that the League Council will meet at a very early date to reconsider its Bombay resolution.

H. E. the Viceroy in his letter to Mr. Jinnah, dated October 12, 1946, says :

Dear Mr. Jinnah—I confirm what I told you this evening, that the Muslim League are at liberty to nominate any one they wish for their own quota of seats in the Cabinet, though any person proposed must, of course, be accepted by me and by His Majesty before being appointed.

(2) My intention is to discuss portfolios when all the names have been received, both from the Muslim League and the Congress.

LEAGUE'S DECISION TO JOIN INTERIM GOVERNMENT

Mr. Jinnah, in his letter to H. E. the Viceroy, dated October 13, 1946, says :

Dear Lord Wavell—The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League have considered the whole matter fully and I am now authorised to state that they do not approve of the basis and scheme of setting up the Interim Government which has been decided by you, presumably with the authority of His Majesty's Government. Therefore, the Committee do not and cannot agree with your decision already taken, nor with the arrangements you have already made.

We consider and maintain that the imposition of this decision is contrary to the Declaration of August 8, 1940, but since according to your decision, we have a right to nominate five members of the Executive Council on behalf of the Muslim League, my Committee, have, for various reasons, come to the conclusion that in the interests of Mussalmans and other communities it will be fatal to leave the entire field of administration of the Central Government in the hands of the Congress. Besides, you may be forced to have in your Interim Government Muslims who would not command the respect and confidence of Muslim India which would lead to very serious consequences; and, lastly, for other very weighty grounds and reasons, which are obvious and need not be mentioned, we have decided to nominate five on behalf of the Muslim League in terms of your broadcast dated August 24, 1946, and your two letters to me, dated October 4, 1946, and October 12, 1946, respectively, embodying clarifications and assurances.

H. E. the Viceroy, in his letter to Mr. M. A. Jinnah, dated October 13, 1946 says:

Dear Mr. Jinnah.—Thank you for your letter of to-day's date. I am glad to know that the Muslim League has decided to join the Interim Government. Will you please let me have the names of the five representatives, as they have to be submitted to His Majesty for approval, and I should like to re-form the Government as soon as possible ?

2. You promised yesterday that you would let me have the names to-day.

Mr. Jinnah, in his letter to H. E. the Viceroy, dated October 14, 1946, says :

Dear Lord Wavell—I thank you for your letter of October 13.

I am now sending you names of five nominees on behalf of the Muslim League as arranged in our interview of yesterday.

(1) Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League, M.L.A. (Central); (2) Mr. I. I. Chundrigar, M.L.A. (Bombay), Leader, Muslim League Party in the Bombay Legislative Assembly and President of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League: (3) Mr. Abdur Rab Nishtar, Advocate (N.W.F.P.), Member, Working Committee, All-India Muslim League Committee of Action and Council; (4) Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan, M.L.A. (Punjab) Member, Council of All-India Muslim League and Council of the Provincial Muslim League and Member of the Punjab Muslim League Working Committee; (5) Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal, Advocate (Bengal), at Present Minister of the Bengal Government.

ALLOCATION OF PORTFOLIOS

H. E. the Viceroy, in his letter to Mr. Jinnah, dated October 25, 1946, says:

Dear Mr. Jinnah—The portfolios that I can offer the Muslim League in the Interim Government are the following:—Finance, Commerce, Posts and Air, Health, Legislative.

2. I should be grateful if you let me know how you would propose that these portfolios should be distributed among the Muslim League representatives in the Cabinet.

3. I should like to get an announcement out to-night, and to swear in the new members whom I shall warmly welcome to-morrow.

Mr. Jinnah, in his letter to H. E. the Viceroy, dated October 25, says:

Dear Lord Wavell—I am in receipt of your letter of October 25, 1946, at 5-30 p.m. communicating your decision regarding portfolios.

I am sorry I cannot say that it is an equitable distribution, but we have discussed all the pros and cons, and as you have taken your final decision, I need not go into the matter further.

I am sending you below the names of the nominees of the Muslim League showing how these portfolios should be distributed amongst them.

Finance—Mr. Liaqat Ali khan; Commerce—Mr. I. I. Chundrigar; Posts and Air: Mr. A. R. Nishtar; Health—Mr. Ghaznafar Ali Khan; and Legislative—Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal.

Mr. Jinnah on League Members' Role in Interim Govt.

Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, said at New Delhi **on the 14th November:—**

"The Interim Government should not be allowed to do anything administratively or by convention which would in any way prejudice or militate against the problem of the future constitution of India and we shall certainly resist any attempt which directly or indirectly prejudices or militates against our demand of Pakistan." Mr. Jinnah who was speaking at an interview given jointly to Foreign Press correspondents in response to their individual requests, agreed with the suggestion that the Muslim League Members of the Interim Government were "sentinels" who would watch Muslim interests and added they would help "in the day-to-day administration." Replying to the question whether he had decided to summon a meeting of the League Council, Mr. Jinnah said, "No. I have not." He refused to disclose his plans in this respect.

Asked what were the prospects of success of the present Interim Government Mr. Jinnah said, "It is a very big question." He made it clear that he did not approve of the present arrangement, saying, "It is forced upon us." "I think myself," Mr. Jinnah said, "this Labour Government in Britain has blundered seriously and is blundering. It is living in dreamland and is pursuing mistaken policies, may be with the best of intentions."

PAKISTAN THE ONLY SOLUTION

Mr. Jinnah declared that the only solution of the Indian problem was a division of British India into Pakistan and Hindustan whose constitutions should be drawn up by two Constituent Assemblies. As soon as this was achieved, he said, "this tension, which will continue so long as one nation is going to rule over another, will cease". The minorities in both States would then settle down as minorities and "the majorities then will have no national quarrel". "The problem will then be how best to give safeguards and protection to minorities and unless you say that we are reduced to bestiality, there is no reason why Muslims should not give generous protection to minorities." Division alone, Mr. Jinnah said, will give both Hindus and Muslims freedom in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Jinnah dismissed pan-Islam as an "exploded bogey" and declared, "Whatever others might say, I think that these two States of Pakistan and Hindustan by virtue of contiguity and mutual interests will be friends in this sub-continent. They will go to each other's rescue in case of danger and will be able to say 'Hands off' to other nations. We shall then have a Monroe Doctrine more solid than in America. I am not fighting for Muslims, believe me, when I demand Pakistan," he said, adding, "Pakistan and Hindustan alone will bring freedom to both Hindus and Muslims."

Asked what would happen in the next six months or a year when the Congress and the League are not agreed on the question of the division of the country, Mr. Jinnah said, "What happens is what you see. You have been witnessing what is happening."

EXCHANGE OF POPULATIONS

Mr. Jinnah made a direct reference to the present disturbances when he said, "The exchange of populations will have to be considered seriously as far as possible, especially after this Bihar tragedy."

Answering another question, Mr. Jinnah said that the Interim Government was not a Cabinet and it was not a Coalition. It was, he said, the Executive Council of the Governor-General formed under the Government of India Act of 1919.

"A Coalition, as I understand it," Mr. Jinnah said, "can only be formed when there is a sovereign Parliament composed of two or more parties, who form themselves into political parties, formulating policies that they think are in the interests of their nation, both external and internal. And when there arises a national emergency, these parties concentrate on those issues which endanger the national interests of the people. Of course, in such a Coalition there is joint and collective responsibility. They work together provisionally until the crisis or danger is averted. That is my view of looking at it constitutionally."

"In the Foreign Press it is given out," said Mr. Jinnah, "that Pandit Nehru is the Prime Minister and that it is Pandit Nehru's Government and I also hear Pandit Nehru is described as Vice-President. There have been Vice-Presidents since 1919. Under the present Constitution, the Viceroy has to appoint a Vice-President and his function is only to preside in case the Viceroy is unable to preside over the Executive Council."

Asked about Indian States, Mr. Jinnah said that the demand for division into Pakistan and Hindustan was confined to British India, but the States at a later stage would be free to join either Pakistan or Hindustan. "My own view is let these States develop for themselves. It is a matter now between the Rulers and their subjects. The States, of course, will have to advance. In course of time I think there will be complete self-government in the States, quicker than we imagine because of events in British India."

"EQUAL RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN"

The plan for Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah said, called for a popular representative Government in which "every citizen, no matter what his caste, colour or creed, will have equal rights."

Asked when the League Council would be summoned, Mr. Jinnah commented. "I can't say." Pressed further, he said he could not discuss the matter now "for State reasons—it is not in the public interest just now."

Asked if he agreed with a statement made in the *Dawn*, Mr. Jinnah replied: "It is very often said that *Dawn* is my paper and sometimes it is described that whatever *Dawn* says is inspired by me for the Muslim League organisation. Let me tell you it is absolutely untrue. No doubt *Dawn* follows the Muslim League policy. It is a trust, it does not belong to the Muslim League. As a trustee, no doubt, I have to manage and direct the trust. But I assure you I have never interfered with my editor as a trustee or otherwise. If there was any serious fundamental departure from Muslim League policy, then naturally I would interfere."

"NO SUCH THING AS INDIAN"

India's civil strife will continue until "absolute" Pakistan is achieved, Mr. Jinnah told foreign journalists. "I don't think there will be peace throughout the country without a division of Pakistan and Hindustan," he said.

Mr. Jinnah ascribed the present killing and destruction to fear on the part of both communities of "one nation ruling the other." He said this fear will be removed when the Hindus and Muslims each have their own State. "The Hindu minorities in Pakistan areas will then have to resign themselves to the status of a minority."

Mr. Jinnah several times in the course of the interview admonished the journalists for using the term "Indian", saying "there is no such thing." "The division of India into sovereign States will in the shortest possible time give independence to both communities. We can then safely tell the British that we are able to manage our own affairs", Mr. Jinnah declared.

Returning to the communal riots, Mr. Jinnah said the Interim Government had no power to intervene in provincial disturbances which, he claimed, is vested in the Governor-General and the Provincial Governments under the 1919 Act.

Pressed to define the territorial limits of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah admitted it might have to consist of two parts, but said that "Eastern Pakistan" consisting of Bengal and Assam would have a population of seventy millions. He said he saw no need for a Pakistan-Hindustan Federation since Muslim India will be a mighty State with a population of hundred millions and Hindu India will be one of the world's largest States with at least two hundred million inhabitants."

The Muslim League President alleged that the British Labour Government "has no policy for India or Palestine—they are just drifting."

Mr. Jinnah refused to commit himself on League policy in regard to the forthcoming Constituent Assembly or the long-term Cabinet Mission plan. Mr. Jinnah expressed the opinion that the Indian States should not be represented in the Constituent Assembly but should be allowed to join the unions later if they desired. "I will not interfere with the States", he added.

Muslim League Boycott of Constituent Assembly

Jinnah-Viceroy Correspondence

In the meantime, invitations were sent out to members to attend the Constituent Assembly session beginning on December 9. The delay in arriving at a decision on this essential preliminary to the convening of the Assembly was explained in the letter released by Mr. Jinnah on the 20th November. It indicated that the Muslim League attitude was not finally made clear till November 16, when Mr. Jinnah pressed for an indefinite postponement of the Constituent Assembly.

The announcement that the Constituent Assembly will meet as originally arranged and that invitations were issued on the 20th November was regarded as in the nature of a reply to Mr. Jinnah.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in a letter to the Viceroy, dated November 17, asked for the postponement of the Constituent Assembly 'sine die.' Mr. Jinnah contested the claim of the Congress that it had accepted the statement of May 16. After referring to the circumstances in Bihar, Mr. Jinnah said that the Constituent Assembly should be postponed and all energy should be concentrated upon restoring peace and order. These points are contained in his reply to a letter from the Viceroy dated November 5, in which His Excellency hoped that Mr. Jinnah would arrange to summon the League Council with a view to their accepting the state paper. The two letters were released by Mr. Jinnah on the 20th November. The following is the text of the correspondence :—

Letter from the Viceroy to Mr. Jinnah dated November 5, 1946.

"Dear Mr. Jinnah: Before I went on my visit to Bengal and Bihar I spoke to you about summoning your Council with a view to their accepting the settlement of May 16th. I hope you will arrange this at an early date. I am doubtful myself whether there is any use in holding further discussions, but if you are convinced that some assurance is necessary would you please let me know what exactly it is. I suggest that it might be a good thing for you to have another talk with Sir B. N. Rao who would, I am sure, be glad to call on you.

Letter from Mr. Jinnah to the Viceroy. dated November 17, 1946.

Dear Lord Wavell

I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th November, 1946 and I thank you for it. Owing to the very grave situation created in Bihar it was not possible for me to consult such of my colleagues as would have been available in Delhi, or my Committee of Action and, in order not to delay my reply, I have consulted some and to inform you that the Congress have not accepted the statement of May 16 from the very beginning. To mention only few official documents, here is the letter of the President of the Congress, dated 25th of June, the Congress Working Committee's resolution of the 26th of June and various pronouncements of the foremost Congress leaders and thereafter the Wardha resolution of the Congress Working Committee dated August 10. This clearly show that the Congress never had, nor have they even now, accepted the statment of May 16.

Even recently, in a letter to Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi, Prime Minister of Assam published on the 12th of September, 1946 (after the Assam Legislative Assembly had given a mandate to their representatives to the Constituent Assembly in the clearest terms to defy the fundamentals of the Statement of May 16), Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru says:—

"I fully appreciate the feeling in Assam in regard to the sections or grouping and I think that our position will safeguard our sentiment completely. Having accepted the document of May 16 we have inevitably to accept going into the sections, but the question is as to how we shall function in these sections. You are right in saying that I did not go into this matter in my broadcast, because I did not wish to raise controversial issues there. But our position is clear that provincial autonomy must be maintained and a province must decide both about grouping and its own constitution.

"It is true that we have accepted the Federal Court's decision in regard to the interpretation and we must abide by that decision of ours. But in no event we are going to agree to a province like Assam being forced against its will to do anything.

"The Constituent Assembly has now been postponed to December and we do not know what developments might take place by that time. Whatever they might be, if Assam is strong enough nothing can happen to Assam that it does not like."

Next, Mr. Gandhi, only as recently as the third of October, 1946, in one of his pronouncements, said:

"The Constituent Assembly is based on the state paper. That paper has put in cold storage the idea of Pakistan. It has recommended the device of grouping, which the Congress interprets in one way, the League in another and the Cabinet Mission in a third way. No law-giver can give an authoritative interpretation of his own law. If, then, there is dispute as to the interpretation, a duly constituted court of law must decide it."

In the first place there is no provision in the statement of May 16 for any court to decide what is the true interpretation of the document. Besides, the basis and fundamental principle underlying that document is not, and cannot be made a justifiable issue. The proposal embodied in the statement of May 16 are recommendations of the Cabinet delegation and yourself, which can only be carried out when both the major parties are agreed in the clearest manner and unquestionably, upon the fundamentals.

I quite appreciate when you say that there is no use in holding further discussions and you informed me that there was no chance of the Congress agreeing to it judging from the position they had taken up. In these circumstances, I hope, you will appreciate that it will be futile for me to summon the Council of the All-India Muslim League.

You ask me to let you know, what exactly it is in the way of assurances that will be necessary. The question is not as you put it that, if some assurances are necessary, I should let you know exactly what they are. The real question is to get the Congress first to agree to fundamentals in the clearest language and then devise ways and means by which the proposals can be implemented and enforced by His Majesty's Government if the Congress break their word.

Apart from this impossible position that the Congress have taken up throughout and have followed up at the present moment, now we are face to face with the mass, organized and planned ruthless massacres of the Muslims in various parts of Bihar. The foul and gruesome methods adopted under the very nose of the Congress Government, the administration and the police in Bihar show that the Congress have entirely failed to protect the life and property of innocent people, to say nothing of the small-scale killing and destruction of property that are going on in various other parts of the country, where the Muslims are in minority. In this highly surcharged and explosive atmosphere even to think of the proposed Constituent Assembly or any talk about it, when we are faced with two hostile camps, with the result that killing, murder and destruction of property are going on apace, is neither advisable nor possible. It will only exacerbate the present situation.

I most earnestly urge upon you to concentrate upon the measures to be adopted and carried out to protect life and property without delay. The entire machinery of the administration of the Government must immediately be concentrated upon establishing peace and tranquillity and succour and help those who are homeless, foodless, clothless and in need of medical help and wandering about in Bihar in thousands—the latest reliable estimates so far available are about 30,000 killed and 1,50,000 refugees—and further to see by every means how to avoid and prevent a recurrence of human slaughter in future. This is your sacred duty and trust and I hope you will immediately impress upon His Majesty's Government to take up this immediate task. In my opinion, therefore, you should announce immediately the postponement of the Constituent Assembly 'sine die' and let us all concentrate every ounce of our energy upon restoring peace and order first".

Jinnah's Directive to Boycott Constituent Assembly

Mr. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in a statement from New Delhi on the **21st November** said that no representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly and the Bombay resolution of the Muslim League Council, passed on July 29, stands.

"I deeply regret," said Mr. Jinnah, "that the Viceroy and His Majesty's Government have decided to summon the Constituent Assembly on the ninth of December. In my opinion, it is one more blunder of very grave and serious character. It is quite obvious that the Viceroy is blind to the present serious situation and the realities facing him and is entirely playing into the hands of the Congress and is appeasing them in complete disregard of the Muslim League and other organisations and elements in the national side of the country.

"In these circumstances, it is obvious that no representative of the Muslim League will participate in the Constituent Assembly, and the Bombay resolution of the Muslim League Council, passed on July 29, stands. By forcing this meeting of the Constituent Assembly, the matter has been further exasperated and a situation has been created which will lead to serious consequences. I want to make it clear that no representative of the Muslim League should attend the Constituent Assembly summoned to meet on the ninth of December, 1946."

Nehru on Alliance between League & Br. officials

Pandit Nehru, in an outspoken declaration in the Subjects Committee of the Congress at Meerut on the **21st. November**, stated that the atmosphere in the Interim Government, after the League's entry, had become so strained that Congress members had twice threatened to resign. "Our patience is fast reaching the limit," he added. "If these things continue" he went on, "a struggle on a large scale is inevitable."

He charged the Viceroy with failure to carry on the Government in the spirit in which he had started. "He is gradually removing the wheels of the car and this is leading to a critical situation."

Even since its entry into the Government, the League, he declared, had pursued its aim to enlist British support. He had once written to Mr. Jinnah that differences between the Congress and the League in the Interim Government should be settled by themselves, without the Viceroy's intervention. Mr. Jinnah did not categorically reject this suggestion. But, after coming into the Government, the League had been endeavouring to establish itself as "the King's party" in the Government. The British Government for its part had been exploiting this position for its own purposes.

"There is a mental alliance between the League and senior British officials."

Referring to the Constituent Assembly and the Congress decision to enter it, Pandit Nehru said that, if the League did not accept the proposals of May 16 as was clear from Mr. Jinnah's letter to the Viceroy, then there was no room for League representatives in the Interim Government.

"While they are welcome to join the Constituent Assembly, let me make it clear that, whether they come in or keep out, we will go on."

"I am not enamoured of this Constituent Assembly. But we have accepted it and we shall work it and get the fullest advantage out of it. I do not regard it as by any means the last Constituent Assembly. It may be that, after India achieves ample freedom, another Constituent Assembly will be called.

"The only good thing about this Constituent Assembly is that the British power will not be directly represented in it, though we may not be able to check its indirect representation by the back door."

Pandit Nehru reiterated the determination to go into the Constituent Assembly in full strength and fully organised. "We will enter it, not in order to quarrel over petty things but to establish the Indian Republic." (Cheers).

Opposing Mr. Jinnah's demand for postponement 'sine die,' Pandit Nehru said that the postponement for five months would mean that it would be never meet. Pandit Nehru was speaking on a resolution, declaring on the eve of the summoning of the Constituent Assembly, that the Congress stands for an independent sovereign republic.

The Muslim League and the Interim Government

Pandit Nehru Releases Correspondence

The terms of the Muslim League's participation in the Interim Government are made clear in letters from which extracts were released on the 23rd November by Pandit Nehru. In releasing the extracts from the correspondence, Pandit Nehru said:

Certain correspondence between H. E. the Viceroy and Mr. M. A. Jinnah was published about three weeks ago. This related to the participation of the members of the Muslim in the Cabinet. A number of letters bearing on the subject and more specially on the terms of the Muslim League's participation in the Interim Government were exchanged between H. E. the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Some extracts from these letters are now released to the Press for public information:

VICEROY ON BASIS OF NEW GOVERNMENT

Extract from H. E. the Viceroy's letter dated October 4, 1946 to Mr. M. A. Jinnah :

In a Coalition Government, it is impossible to decide major matters of policy when one of the main parties to the coalition is strongly against a course of action proposed. My present colleagues and I agreed that it would be fatal to allow major communal issues to be decided by vote in the Cabinet. The efficiency and prestige of the Interim Government will depend on ensuring that differences are resolved in advance of Cabinet meetings by friendly discussion. A Coalition Government either works by a process of mutual adjustment or does not work at all.

Since the basis of the participation in the Cabinet is, of course, acceptance of the Statement of May 16, I assume that the League Council will meet at a very early date to reconsider its Bombay resolution.

NEHRU'S LETTER TO VICEROY

Extract from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letter dated October 14 to H. E. the Viceroy :—

It is important for us to understand exactly how he (Mr. Jinnah) proposes to join and what these terms are to which he refers. Various statements in newspapers and more specially in the official Muslim League organ are disconcerting in the extreme. Our past experience does not encourage us to rely on vague and ambiguous phrases. These usually lead to misunderstandings and subsequent argument which is not edifying. It is desirable, therefore, to be precise in such matters and to know exactly where we stand.

We know the terms of your broadcast in August last and I have seen your letter to Mr. Jinnah dated October 4. I have not seen your letter to him dated October 12. I trust that this does not contain anything beyond what was contained in the broadcast or the letter of October 4. If so, we should be informed of it so that we might know what the exact position is.

As I understand it, the offer you made in your broadcast was that five places in the Interim Government could be taken by the Muslim League. In your letter of October 4, you made it clear that a Coalition Government must necessarily work as a team and not as a joining together of rival groups which did not co-operate for a common purpose. Further, you state that the basis for participation in the Cabinet must, of course, be presumed to be the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16.

It seems to us much better that any possible misunderstanding should be removed at this stage so that it may not come in our way later on. We have to face a difficult situation. So far as we are concerned, we shall make every effort to work co-operatively and as a team. During the last six weeks we have done so with considerable success and to the advantage of our work. Almost every decision of ours, to whatever department it might have belonged, has been taken after joint consultation and agreement. This has made us to some extent jointly responsible for the working of the various departments and the burden of any particular portfolio has been shared by others. We propose to continue to work in this manner. How far the Muslim League members share this outlook with us I do not know. Any other approach would lead to friction and delay in the disposal of our work. In any event, we think it necessary for us to know as fully as possible, the terms to which Mr. Jinnah refers in his letter of October 13. If there is any variation or addition to them as contained in your broadcast and your letter of October 4, we should be informed of it.

H. E. the Viceroy's letter dated October 15 to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :—

Thank you for your letter of yesterday, I enclose a copy of my letter to Mr. Jinnah dated October 12. There have been no assurances or explanations to Mr. Jinnah that go beyond the terms of the broadcast and the letters of October 4 and 12.

CANCELLATION OF BOMBAY RESOLUTION DEMANDED

Extract from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letter dated October 23 to H. E. the Viceroy :

In my correspondence with you and in your letter addressed to me as well as to Mr. Jinnah it was made clear that the Muslim League's joining the Interim Government meant inevitably their acceptance of the long-term scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the Statement of May 16. I need not trouble you with reference to this in various letters. It was pointed out then that a formal decision of the Muslim League to this effect would have to be taken by the Council of the League, as they had originally passed the resolution of non-acceptance. Nevertheless, it was made clear that the Working Committee of the League would itself recommend the acceptance of this scheme and the formality could follow soon after. It was on this basis that we proceeded. We suggest, therefore, that these two points should be cleared up.

(1) The Muslim League's acceptance of the long-term scheme as embodied in the statement of May 16, subject only to a formal ratification by the Council of the League at an early date, which should be fixed.

(2) The approach of the League to the Interim Government and in particular whether Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan's and Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan's speeches recently delivered represent that approach or not.

If this clarification is satisfactory, the next step to be taken is the allotment of portfolios. The second step cannot precede the first, for it is dependent upon it and governed by it.

From past experience, you will appreciate how this clarification and precision are necessary in order to avoid future trouble. This is all the more necessary because the Muslim League are not joining the interim Government after an agreement with Congress. Even as it is, we welcome their coming in, but that coming in would have little value and in fact might even be harmful to all concerned if it was really a prelude to inner as well as to outer conflicts.

JINNAH'S ASSURANCE TO VICEROY

Extract from H. E. the Viceroy's letter dated October 23 to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

I have made it clear to Mr. Jinnah, whom I have seen to-day, that the Muslim League's entry into the Interim Government is conditional on the acceptance of the scheme of the Cabinet Delegation contained in the statement of May 16 and explained in the statement of May 25 and that he must call his Council at an early date to agree to this.

As I told you, Mr. Jinnah has assured me that the Muslim League will come into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating. He regrets and condemns as deeply as you do the recent disturbances in East Bengal.

The Indian National Congress

54th Session—Meerut—23rd & 24th November 1946

The 54th annual session of the Indian National Congress opened at Meerut on the 23rd November 1946 with *Acharya Kripalani* in the chair. Delegates and visitors numbering 100,000 according to one estimate, sat in the pandal, while a much larger concourse filled the approaches and pushed and jostled and milled round for vantage points from which to see and cheer the leaders as they entered in procession. Loud speakers carried the speeches to the gathering outside.

Welcome Address

Chaudhury Raghubir Narain Singh, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates, said that Meerut, where the first shots in the Mutiny of 1857 were fired, was proud of the honour of playing host to the annual session of the Indian National Congress. The power which had kept us enslaved, he said, was now weakening, but had not lost all strength as was shown by the happenings during Pandit Nehru's tour of the Frontier.

Referring to the disturbances in Noakhali and Bihar, he said that our leaders were trying hard to put an end to them, but the power to incite violence was often greater than the power to check it. The disturbances had spread to Meerut and had forced on us a purely business-like session. He, however, asserted that the city of Meerut had to share the responsibility for some of the dreadful things done in certain parts of the district. He extended a warm welcome to the delegates and asked their indulgence for any shortcomings.

A resolution of condolences on the leaders who died during the last six and a half years was first passed.

Acharya Kripalani's Call to Nation

Acharya Kripalani then delivered his presidential address. The following is the text :—

"We are meeting after full six years—years momentous in the history of our own struggle for freedom. During the period, we came twice into open conflict with the British Government. In 1941, we started the Individual Civil Disobedience movement to vindicate the right of every Indian freely to express his opinion about the war in which India was dragged against her will. It succeeded in attaining this limited objective. The second was the all-comprehensive 'Quit India' struggle." Mr. Kripalani referred to the release of the leaders in 1945, the abortive conference at Simla, the visit of the Parliamentary delegation, followed by the visit of the Cabinet Mission, the long negotiations at Delhi and Simla, culminating in the historic Statement of May 16 and the formation of the Interim Government in September last by the Congress. "Soon the Viceroy began talks with the League leaders on his own initiative, without the consent of his colleagues in the Cabinet. Such a procedure was not contemplated. The offer made to the Congress was unconditional. Nevertheless, the Congress, always willing and anxious for unity, dit not object. Through the Viceroy the Congress and the League resumed negotiations. The result again was failure. However, in the end, the League accepted the Viceroy's invitation to nominate five out of fourteen members in the Interim Government. Thus the League representatives are to-day in the National Government working as colleagues with our own representatives. It is hoped that facing the same difficulties and solving the same problems, a workable unity will be evolved that will carry us over these troublous times."

NEED FOR CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT

"I believe," Mr. Kripalani said, "that if the Congress had not taken up the challenge of British imperialism in August 1942, we would not be occupying the position we do to-day. Nor indeed would the Muslim League and other minorities, though some of them may not like to admit the fact. True we have not yet achieved our goal of Purna Swaraj. But our representatives and leaders have broken into the citadal of power. This is not the end of foreign domination, but it is surely the beginning of the end, provided we know how to utilise our opportunities. However, even when we have achieved our goal of complete independence we must not think that our task is done. National liberty is precious indeed. It is the very breath of a nation's life. But however important, it is a negative achievement—a removal of external shackles. If we are wise we will not rest content merely with the removal of external restraints, but will so order our affairs that the freedom we gain is translated into concrete good to our people. This means that our revolutionary zeal, even while it destroys the old order must constantly achieve creative expression in constructive activity.

"This constructive effort should be nothing new for us. Our revolutionary movement, based as it is on non-violence, is unique in history. Usually political revolutions have aimed at the destruction of the old order. All constructive effort to remould the nation's life has been done after the old order was completely destroyed and power captured. This progress has inevitably led not to one but a series of revolutions before things could settle down and constructive effort begun. Not unoften, the progress has led to civil war and ultimately to dictatorship. Both civil war and dictatorship have a tendency to defeat the aims of a revolution. It was so in the French and Russian revolutions. The Congress under Gandhiji's lead has avoided over-emphasis on mere destruction or on the capture of power. It has, on the other hand, laid great emphasis on the constructive programme. Now that Congressmen are at the helm of affairs in many provinces and even at the Centre we have some sort of a National Government, it should not be difficult to intensify our effort and realise the full possibilities of the constructive programme as enunciated by Gandhiji and accepted by the Congress."

DECENTRALISATION OF INDUSTRY

Reiterating the emphasis placed by the Congress on political democracy and economic equality, Mr. Kripalani said: "Economic equality may be of the communist order based on centralised big industry or it may be democratic and based upon a fair degree of decentralisation. If democracy is to survive, it must discover a means of avoiding concentration of economic power in the hands of the ruler or rulers however selected or elected. Even a political democracy can be a dictatorship if there are no spheres of free activity left to the individual. The historical role of the Congress in the economic field has been its bold advocacy of decentralised industry. The Congress appointed in 1939 a Planning Committee under the presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This Committee has been at work for several years. It has collected facts and figures. It is time that its labours are utilised. But these cannot be utilised unless the Congress makes up its mind as to what industries are to be centralised and what decentralised. Unless that is done each province will go its own way. I am afraid that already there is a kind of competition even among the Congress provinces in the field of big industry. Each province wants to introduce as many mills and factories as possible. We had thought that the cloth industry was the one most eminently suited for decentralisation. But even here each Provincial Government is vying with the other to set up new cloth mills. Some people believe that in the present state of scarcity of cloth all means of increased production must be utilised. They, however, fail to see that this necessarily creates new capitalist vested interests. As a khadi worker I believe that with less capital and less effort and in a shorter time more can be accomplished by a systematic encouragement of the charka and the handloom than by opening new mills. I have taken the example of the cloth industry. But it is time that we took counsel among ourselves and decided what industries might be be worked on centralised and what on decentralised basis."

Proceeding, the President said: "Our agriculture too must largely follow the pattern of decentralised industry. It must chiefly consist of peasant proprietorships, with a provision that no plot shall be sub-divided, whether on account of inheritance, debt or any other cause, beyond what would maintain a villager's family. Recently in response to a non-official resolution moved in the A.I.C.C. it was decided by the Working Committee that the Provincial Governments be asked to send to the A.IC.C. office their schemes for the abolition of the Zamindari system. The material received should be systematised and placed before the Working Committee for consideration. I hope the direction of the Working Committee in this matter will be speedily given effect to and a body of experts appointed to prepare a comprehensive plan for the elimination of the middleman in our agricultural economy. The food problem which assumed dangerous proportions during the war continues to be our great concern even to-day. We are still dependent on what foreign countries may choose to dole out to us. This dependence on the foreigner must be eliminated where the most primary needs of existence are concerned."

CONGRESS MUST WORK FOR A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

"The historical evolution of our freedom movement," Mr. Kripalani said, "pledged as it is to non-violence and the good of the masses, demands a social order free from exploitation functioning democratically and turned to international co-operation and peace. Such a society will be in consonance with the highest ideals of the age and time we live in. The Congress under Gandhiji's lead has been working for these objects. Now it must define the objects more clearly and work more consciously towards their realisation and utilise its newly acquired power towards that end."

Calling for national unity at the present critical juncture, Mr. Kripalani said : To-day we have some kind of a National Government at the Centre and provinces have their popularly elected Governments. In a short time we shall be assembling to form a new constitution for India. Freedom if not achieved is surely in sight. The British can no longer deny it to us, whatever their intention. If to day we miss our goal, the fault shall be ours. It will be due to the mistakes of commission and omission we make at this critical juncture. The greatest strength of British imperialism in India is that it has been possible for it to carry out its nefarious designs through the instrumentality of the Indians themselves. Our tragedy has been our divisions and differences and a tendency to subordinate large national interests to those of caste, creed and party. We give to the smaller units the loyalty that is due to the whole. Herein lies our greatest weakness.

BANE OF COMMUNAL DIFFERENCES

Of all the political virtues, unity is the greatest and the most important, provided this unity is not superimposed by force but is natural and spontaneous. But in India small differences produce unbridgeable gulfs. Common points are forgotten, petty disagreements over-emphasised. We must, if we have to live and progress as a nation, check this inherent centrifugal tendency. At present the greatest danger to our freedom is the communal differences, specially between the two major communities, the Hindus and the Muslims. The foreigner has taken the fullest advantage of these in the past. To day he finds it his last trump card. He is playing it cleverly and subtly. It is unhistorical, unscientific, unethnic and unnatural to think that the Hindus and the Muslims are two nations. Their interests, social, political and economic are identical. Their common points are innumerable. Their differences can be easily counted and are only skin deep. The foreigner cannot distinguish the Hindu from the Muslim except by the accident of dress, and that too only if he is familiar with sartorial differences which change from province to province. India, outside India, is considered one whole. To think of India as divided into two nations, Hindu and Muslim, is retrograde and reactionary. It is dividing what nature and history have united. I have my own grandnephews and nieces in Sind who are Muslims. They love me as well as do my Hindu grand-children. I cannot imagine that I as a Hindu am an Indian and they as Muslims belong to a different nationality. One of them, a pretty little bride, wrote to me recently thus: "We offer you our sincerest congratulations on your attaining *the highest honour which any Indian can aspire to.* May you long adorn the Congress gadi with distinction and service. We are, of course, staunch Muslim Leaguers, but we pray that there should be a rapprochement between the Congress and the League."

WARNING AGAINST ANTI-NATIONAL COMPROMISES

I hold that a Hindu who believes a Muslim to be an alien not only does wrong to his religion but is an enemy of the freedom and progress of India. On the other hand, if a Muslim who is flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, believes and acts as if he were an alien on Indian soil, he does equal harm to his community and to the nation. We have almost everything in common except religion which should be a personal matter. To fight on questions of faith is the way of a barbarian. I know the present fight between Hindus and Muslims is not a religious fight. It has nothing to do with political or economic issues that concern the masses of both the communities. The masses act as tools in the hands of the clever and often, unscrupulous politicians. But, whatever the causes, we must recognise the fact of the existing tension and bitterness, and steer our course so as to avoid any major conflict. I have already in my public statements, made after my election, said that the Congress must yield to the demands of the minorities, Muslim or any other, but not at the expense of the good of the nation. Such yielding in the past has largely been responsible for our present troubles. I believe much of our present trouble could have been avoided had we boldly refused to accept the undemocratic and anti-national principle of separate electorates. The communal conflict has to-day assumed not only a serious but a vicious aspect. It is quite possible that to avoid immediate trouble we may accept principles that cut at the root of nationality and democracy. If we do so, we shall not only be betraying the nation, but ultimately the Muslim and the other communities. I hope our elders will guard themselves and the country against being coerced or cajoled into making any anti-national and undemocratic compromises in the future.

EAST BENGAL AND BIHAR

I was recently in East Bengal and Bihar. It would be criminal for me to mince matters. Those who were responsible for the tragedy in East Bengal had given the masses an idea that Pakistan could be established by force—*Larke Lenge Pakistan. Marke Lenge Pakistan !* If once the idea enters into the mass mind that the communal problem can be solved by force, it will be an evil day, not only for India but for all the communities concerned. I am an absolute believer in non-violence. But if the strain that was put on people in East Bengal had been put upon me, I do not know what my reflex action would have been. If I must warn communities against the use of initial violence to settle their differences, I must warn them no less against the use of violence by way of retaliation and reprisal as was the case in Bihar. Two evils do not cancel each other. And these reprisals and retaliations fall on innocent victims, even if the original attack was against those who really had done wrong and deserved punishment.

The Central Government failing to interfere in Bengal, the provinces became virtually independent. The neighbouring province of Bihar under the circumstances was entitled to protest against what happened to the Biharis in Calcuttta. The Bihar Government would also have been entitled to warn the Bengal Government against the probable repurcussions of what was being perpetrated against the Hindus in East Bengal with what looked almost like the connivance of the Government. The Bihar Government should have made it plain to Bengal that the Hindus in Bihar were profoundly agitated over the fate of their co-religionists in Bengal and that with the best will in the world the Government might not be able to control the situation if the feelings of the people were strained beyond a certain pitch. The Hindus of Bihar should have agitated and insisted upon their Government to take up that position. That would have been the proper and constitutional way. If the Centre fails to make itself responsible for internal secu- rity in the provinces, I am clearly of the opinion that popular Governments in the provinces must take up such matters with each other in future. If they do so, they are likely to arrive at a better arrangement than if the communities take the law into their own hands and indulge in reprisals.

Violence is ugly and futile in any case, but the unorganised hysteric violence of the mob is worse than futile. It is fatal to the very cause on whose behalf it is invoked. I am afraid that if the present orgies of provocation and retaliation continue, the Muslim League leadership will soon be unable to control its followers, even if it should decide to. And so might the Congress, though the Congress leadership has done its best to save the people from this hysteria of violence. If that happens then Indians will be divided into two armed camps of communal fanatics and the Britisher will stand guard over them both with his bayonet, The day of India's freedom will be indefinitely postponed.

If we are to be worthy of freedom we must learn to live together and respect each other's sentiments. Hindu and Muslim minorities are scattered all over this country. No amount of police or military protection can permanently and effectively protect them from the wrath of the majority communities if the latter lose all sense of moral obligation towards them. If no Hindu's life, property and honour are safe in a Muslim-majority area and no Muslim's in a Hindu-majority area, then civilised life becomes an impossibility. Even Mr. Jinnah's dream of Pakistan, though it has made the problem what it is, holds out no prospect of its solution, for it leaves the minorities where they are. Did his scheme envisage a total and whole-sale transfer of populations and the concentration of all the Muslims in India in one compact territory, so that no Hindu, Sikh, Christian or Parsi is left in the Muslim State and no Muslim left anywhere else in India, the scheme might at least have the merit of being a logical solution of the problem however costly, tragic and inhuman it might be to carry it out. Even if the Muslims must have a theocratic State of their own they cannot be allowed to impose it on Hindu, Sikh and other minorities it their territory. These minorities have at least as much right of self-determination as the Muslims claim for themselves in India as a whole. Nor can the rest of India be responsibly expected to harbour large sections of population in its midst who openly repudiate their citizenship in that state. If the Muslim League claims Pakistan on religious and communal grounds, let it face all its implications and not try to eat the cake and yet have it. This is a terrible solution, as detrimental in the long run to the Muslim interests as to the Hindu but it is a logical consequence of the communalism with which the League is infecting its followers and which is making a common civilised life difficult. But in no case must we allow the poison of communal strife further to disintegrate our national and corporate life. In no case must we allow ourselves to be bullied and blackmailed by a section of the population into sacrificing the just rights of the others.

APPEAL TO THE LEAGUE

I hope, however, that the leader of the fanatics among both the communities will have more sense and humanity than to take recourse to desperate and mediaeval remedies. The problem is easy of solution if only we accept the obvious fact that if there are two nations in India, they are the exploited and the exploiting of both or all the communities. The Hindus and Muslims have a common enemy and that is poverty, disease and ignorance. If only we realise what we really are there need be no quarrel between us.

I have laboured this point at length because this is the greater stumbling block in our path to freedom and progress. Even at this late hour 1 hope now that the Muslim League is in the Central Government and shares responsibility with the Congress the orgies that were enacted in Calcutta, East Bengal, Bihar and to a lesser degree elsewhere will be nightmares of the past. We shall write anew on a clean slate of brotherly love and co-operation as children of a common motherland.

THE STATES' PROBLEM

Turning to the problem of the States, Mr. Kripalani said :

Like the communal, the State question is easy of solution, if we think in terms of India and not in terms of section or community. The Princes must realise that India cannot be half free and half slave, and that in a free India they cannot exist and carry on as they do now. If they only knew their real self-interest, they would instead of relying upon the precarious help of a swiftly fading imperialism, put their trust in the affections of a free, happy and prosperous people. Political India has no objection to their existence if only they would live and act as democratic, constitutional monarchs.

ABOLITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Calling for the abolition of untouchability, the President said : No less menacing to the freedom and progress of our nation is the canker of untouchability. It mainly affects the Hindu community. But it is such an anachronism and so inhuman that its continuance is bound to poison the whole of our national life. The Provincial Governments must penalise all public exhibitions of untouchability. No public place, be it a road, club, a place of recreation or instruction, or a place of eating, should be close to our Harijan brothers. Also, I think, Provincial Governments can and should legislate that wherever the majority of worshippers in a particular temple desire the same to be opened to the Harijans, it shall be so opened. In every other way the Harijans should be encouraged to take their rightful place of equality with the so-called caste-Hindus. There should be petfect equality. Personally I believe in a classless and casteless society brought about by non-violent means, for violence is bound to create new castes and classes.

WARNING AGAINST POWER POLITICS

Pointing to the danger of power politics in the country, he said : In our struggle our competition so far has been in the field of service, suffering and sacrifice. Now that positions of power and patronage are available to us, let us not kick the leader by which we have ascended to these positions. Let every position of trust, power and responsibility be for the sake of service and not a matter of self, patronage, pride or self-aggrandisement. And when we are in high positions, let us not think in terms of creed, caste or family, but in terms of work and ability.

Turning to the Constituent Assembly, the Congress President observed : We shall soon be meeting in the Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution of free India. It will be a democratic constitution and will be federal in character. We may not, however, forget that, in the administrative as in the economic field, centralisation, more than is absolutely necessary, is inimical to liberty. It is good, therefore, thst the provinces in free India shall have the maximum autonomy consistent with external and internal security. But some of our provinces are each as big as a country in Europe. There may be over-centralisation in the administration of the provinces, which too we must avoid. Progressively, we must delegate to the village panchayats judicial powers in petty criminal and civil cases ; the local police too might be put under the charge of the panchayat. If we build upon this village unit of self-Government, rehabilitate it to the altered condition of to-day, we shall be working in consonance with the genius of our people.

Dealing with India's relations with other countries Mr. Kripalani said: We have always stood for international disarmament, peace, co-operation and open diplomacy. We believe in a new world order based upon goodwill and co-operation. We believe that these objects can be achieved by an international organisation consisting of free and equal nations. We believe that so long as imperialism exists, whatever international organisation is devised for peace, will inevitably be turned into an instrument of ambition by powerful and unscrupulous nations. It will not be based upon equality, justice and fairplay; but upon the combined might of a few dominant nations. There will always be the big Three, Four or Five. That way lies danger. As long as there are dependent nations and peoples, so long will there be conflict and war.

"NO IMPERIALIST AMBITIONS"

A free India will have in the field of international affiliations, connections more natural and more suited to her geographical position that she has had under foreign domination. We have no past commitments and no imperialist ambitions for the future. We are concerned with achieving and maintaining the freedom of our country so that our nationals at home and abroad may have their rightful opportunity to full and free development, according to their resources and their genius. We have no enemies. We would like to forget even the wrongs that Great Britain has done to us, once she has made amends and withdrawn her yoke from our necks. We would have no quarrel with South Africa if in the insolence of racial pride its white minority did not seek to deprive the Indians domiciled there of their elementry rights of citizenship, after having enticed them from home.

We respect the right of every people to choose the form of Government that suits them best without depriving others of the same right. We watch with equal interest the Russian adventure in Communism, the British experiment in Demoratic Socialism, and the American faith in private enterprise. We must not be duped by ideological claptrap into taking sides in international rivalries and thus embroil ourselves in a third world war, in the mistaken belief that we are serving the world. We should have enough scope at home for our reforming zeal without attempting to reform other nations.

Though we must develop and maintain equally friendly relations with all nations, our associations with our neighbours in Asia and Australia will naturally be closer. With China and Japan we have long historic and cultural associations. Even to-day, thanks to Pandit Jawaharalal Nehru, who in the fitness of things is our foreign Minister, we have cordial relations with China. We have also cultural bonds with Indonesia and the eastern islands, which we must develop. India and Australia have nothing to lose as much to gain by closer intercourse. Central Asia and the Middle East are other lands with which we have cultural contacts. With Soviet Russia too our relations must be closer. With all that we must keep up the connections we already have with the western democracies.

NO PLACE FOR FOREIGN COLONIES IN INDIA

There is an aspect of our international relations about which it is necessary. in the interest of peace, that we should make our stand clear. And that is, that though we make no fetish of national sovereignty and are willing to subordinate its rights to the claims of world peace and co-operation on the basis of perfect equality between all peoples we will not tolerate interference with the right of our people to choose their form of Government or violation of the territorial integrity of India. Whether it is the presence of British troops in India against the wishes of our chosen representatives, or foreign-paid propaganda to create dissensions in our ranks or the continued occupation of portions of our soil by the Portuguese and the French on whatever pretensions, it is a violation of those fundamental freedoms of which no nation can be deprived. If the British can quit India as they have unequivocally promised to do, it is ridiculous for the Portuguese authorities to claim that Goa is part of their country thousands of miles away. I congratulate Dr. Rammanohar Lohia for having exposed the gross injustice and indignity to which our compatriots are subjected in Goa. The days of empires are over and to-day when even big and powerful nations are being obliged to give up their empires, it is time that the small nations, in their own interest, should gracefully withdraw from theirs and thus help to remove the main cause of wars between nations.

CLOSE RELATIONS WITH BURMA AND CEYLON

Mr. Kripalani went on to deal with the Indian issue in South Africa which had now gone before the United Nations and the position of Indians in East Africa. He pledged India's support to our countrymen in South and East Africa.

Pleading for close and friendly relations with India's neighbours, Ceylon and Burma, Mr. Kripalani said : "Ceylon and India have been good neighbours all along and the Congress is determined to maintain and develop these relations. Indian nationals in Burma must identify themselves with the people of Burma and mix with them as sugar does with milk. Knit together in a common friendly relationship, India, Burma and Ceylon will be in a position to fulfil their historical mission in the creation of a federation of free Asiatic nations that would constitute a powerful bulwark against imperialism and exploitation, whether of the Western or the Eastern type."

CONGRESS MINISTERS AND THE PEOPLE

Referring next at length to the problems facing the Congress organisation in the New situation the President declared :

The Congress is a democratic organisation seeking to represent and act on behalf of the people of India. It has done this through service, sacrifice and suffering. The first condition of the existence and effective functioning of such an organisation is unity.

This does not mean that there should be no difference of opinion or no groups or parties in the Congress. It only means that the different groups and parties should realise that in an organic unit one cannot be true to a part unless one is true to the whole. The second condition of healthy and effective functioning of the Congress is discipline. This must be self-imposed. We must build such traditions and conventions as would make indiscipline difficult, if not impossible.

In our struggle against foreign imperialism we have learnt and employed certain methods of agitation and struggle for the attainment of our goal of independence. Because these methods have paid us in the past, we are likely to believe that they are of universal application. We imagine that they will serve us also against the democratically established governments which we have now ourselves installed in power. The methods employed in our agitation against the foreign government may not therefore be quite appropriate in the case of our own. Today when we can change our legislators and ministers, direct action should be out of the question. Even in our criticism we must be careful and considerate. Our ministers in the provinces and at the Centre are harassed by so many political and administrative problems that they need our understanding and sympathy. The nation wants too many things done quickly. We have desired freedom so keenly and so long that we have come to believe that its advent will solve all our problems. We are therefore apt to be impatient and to overlook the difficulties our representatives have to face in a government that has no traditions of service and whose officials have always acted as the masters of the people. The machinations of the vested interests, official and unofficial, native and foreign also make the task of a National Government at this initial stage difficult. Our criticism must, therefore, be constructive and sympathetic and never merely destructive. We must give out representatives breathing time to clear the mess that they have inherited. Let nothing be done or said which will be used by our enemies to discredit our representatives in the Government.

But those who are in the Government must also never forget that they are servants of the people not their masters. They must remember that they cannot afford to kick the ladder that has taken them to their present eminence. Let them therefore, always remain loyal to the Congress and through it to the people of India. From them they derive their strength and to them is their first and foremost responsibility. They must also see that they are not swallowed up by the bureaucratic machine. They must reform and simplify it. They must have less of red-tapism and consistently with their public duty they must be accessible to the people. They must also dispense with much of the paraphernalia of pomp and power that a foreign government thought necessary to keep its prestige. Their prestige is derived from service and voluntary poverty which they embraced before office came their way.

REVISION OF CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

It is often complained that the constitution of the Congress has broken down. It no longer works smoothly; the organisation has become too big and complex for it. There is therefore a demand for overhauling it. To meet this demand the A.I.

C.C., has appointed a committee to suggest necessary changes. The committee has met often and made its suggestions. These, if they are approved by the Working Committee and the Subjects Committee, will be placed before you for your adoption. If for any reason it is not possible to adopt the changes immediately, the Constitution Committee has suggested some interim changes which will regulate our elections and eliminate from these, as far as possible corruption, scramble for posts and violence. But we must not forget that external checks cannot be effective, unless we cultivate public virtues. The last war has killed all idealism and made the average citizen cynical. It has introduced black market methods everywhere. These methods are used in Congress elections too. Bribery, fraud, impersonation and sometimes even violence are used to coerce the voter. Ballot boxes are stolen and destroyed. All this is degrading. It is a reflection not only on our public spirit, but on our moral principles. It is strange that we should be non-violent in fighting foreign imperialism but violent in our dealings with each other. This clearly shows that our non-violence is that of the weak and not of the strong. It is better to be strong and violent than to be weak and non-violent.

THE MISSION OF THE CONGRESS

It is our great good fortune that we of this generation have been afforded an opportunity to be the instruments of a noble cause. It is not merely the freedom of people from foreign yoke that we are called upon to strive and work for. Such an opportunity has come to many people in history. Ours is a unique opportunity. It is to win our freedom by non-violent and truthful means and to work for high ends by moral means. Ours is the opportunity to bring about a fusion of different castes and creeds and racial and religious types. Ours is the opportunity to unify what appear to be differing and conflicting cultures. We may not forget that to-day humanity must find a peaceful solution to its conflicts, social, economic, political, racial and cultural, or perish. There can be no violent solution. Violence has over-reached itself. Some other method must be found. India has found the method and tried it to some purpose, under leadership that comes once in many centuries. It is a new method. There have been lapses. But remember, no revolution in history was less costly in the loss of life, property and the dislocation of normal life, and created less hatred and strife than the Indian revolution, which if we are not negligent, is on the verge of success. But whether immediate success crowns our efforts or not let us not forget that we are engaged in a good and great cause. In such a cause there can be no ultimate failure. But if the cause is to succeed, the agents working for it must themselves be good and great. Slavery works neither for goodness nor for greatness. But the darkness of centuries can be removed the moment the light is brought in. In India the light has been lit. Let us keep it steadily burning, and let us follow its lead, and all shall yet be well with us—*Bande Mataram.*

Proceedings and Resolutions

PANDIT NEHRU WARNS THE SERVICES

After the Presidential address, *Pandit Nehru* moved the first main resolution of the session. It was the one passed by the Subjects Committee giving a retrospect of the events during the past six and half years and appealing for internal unity.

Pandit Nehru spoke with warmth on the movement of 1942—which he described as a year of storm, suffering and sacrifice—and the part played by the official world in dealing with it.

"I can never forget the part played by British as well as Indian officers in that year. I realise their position and am prepared to sympathise with them. But those who were responsible for the atrocities committed on the people must not escape punishment. We can show neither fear nor favour in punishing them." (Cheers). He called the attention of Provincial Premiers and Ministers to this matter. He wanted the Viceroy to take note of it.

Pandit Nehru disclosed that the Viceroy had once suggested to him not to "oppress" officials. His reply was he had no intention to oppress them. but had also made it clear more than once that he was not prepared to compromise officials guilty of wrongs during 1942, whether they were British or Indians. He recognised we had to depend on officials, but we must also keep them on the right path and not let them degenerate or be demoralised. We must also protect them. They included good and intelligent men.

But the Services were fossilised in their mental outlook. They were wedded to by-gone and obsolete methods and refused to move with the times. British officers in particular looked to the Muslim League for sympathy and collaboration. They were in effect members of the Muslim League. Both the League and British Servicemen still lived in the mediaeval age mentally.

"It remains to be seen how long we can function in these circumstances. The experience of the past three or four months has shown us that the conduct and attitude of the officers have not changed." The British Government in England might be true to their promises but had to depend on their Agents in India and guided by their advice. The British in India talked of quitting India but at the same time plotted to impede our programme.

But they were not the only enemy. "We have enemies in our camp. We must weed out corruption and defeat these enemies in the final struggle for India's liberation." (cheers).

Pandit Pant seconded the resolution in a brief but forceful speech. After paying homage to those who had worked and sacrificed for independence, Pandit Nehru said that after the "Quit India" resolution, the Congress had increased its strength many times but had still been unable to achieve independence. The only way to it was through unity and organisation. The resolution was passed unanimously.

SARDAR PATEL ON LEAGUE'S POLICY

A stern call to Indians to organise self-defence against hooligans was uttered by *Sardar Patel*, who made a fighting speech in moving the next resolution ratifying the Working Committee's and A. I. C. C.'s decisions leading to the formation of the Interim Government.

Sardar Patel dealt with the circumstances in which the Interim Government was formed and said its formation was made possible by the assurance given during the negotiations that the Government would have the same status as Dominion Government and would work as a Cabinet with joint responsibility, although it was acknowledged that it would be difficult to amend the Act in order to put this position in a legal and constitutional basis.

Referring to the position of the League, Sardar Patel quoted extensively from the letters of the Viceroy published to-day, particularly the one dated October 23 in which His Excellency conveyed the assurance given to him by Mr. Jinnah that the Muslim League would come into the Interim Government and the Constituent Assembly with the intention of co-operating. The Congress accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposals on the solemn declaration of Prime Minister Attlee that no minority would be allowed to veto progress towards independence. Mr. Jinnah as the House knew, rejected the Interim Government proposals at first, but later came in on the plea that Muslim interests demand the League's entry. "Similarly, I know that the League will come into the Constituent Assembly on the same plea."

What was being done to-day was with the object of getting the Congress out of the Interim Government. "We shall not allow ourselves to be caught in the net. We joined the Government with full and firm determination to remain there. We have no intention of leaving it ourselves (cheers). The only way to make us leave it is to dismiss us or to convince us that continuance in it is futile."

It had been stated on behalf of the Muslim League to-day that they objected to the description of Pandit Nehru as Vice-President of the Cabinet. League spokesmen had earlier stated that the Vice-President had no special position in the Cabinet. "If so, why did the League aks for the appointment of Hindu and Muslim members as Vice-President by rotation? (Laugher). The fact is that in spite of all that the League might say, it is a Cabinet and it is known to the world at large as the Nehru Cabinet or the Congress Cabinet (cheers). It has been recognised as a Cabinet by British Government."

Recognising it as a Cabinet, people in different provinces asked the question why it did not bestir itself in connection with the present distubances in the country. The former Government of India used the full armoury of its weapons against the Congress in 1942, when it passed the "Quit India" resolution and had not even decided to implement that resolution. But here was a party, whose members had made violent speeches, and which had launched a programme of direct action without the slightest pretension to non-violence. Yet the Government did nothing. The people asked why? It was a legitimate question and in reply to it, he would first point out that 1942 was not 1946 or rather that 1946 was not 1942. Secondly, to-day the fight was not with the British Government but among ourselves. Thirdly, the British themselves were engaged in a life and death struggle in 1942 and the Government had special and extraordinary powers which had now lapsed.

Bengal Governor's Statement Criticised

Recalling the Bengal Governor's statement that India had attained fifteen-anna Independence and that only one anna still remained, Sardar Patel announced that the fifteen-anna Independence had only given us complete freedom to kill each other. The Governor had witnessed the killing in Calcutta and yet had merely stated that the Ministry had full power to deal with the situation. But the Bengal Ministry had done nothing and the people took the law into their hands. The Interim Government was asked to provide police and military protection. Some leaders from Bengal came to him and asked for intervention. He told them the Centre had no power and that they had the Centre's moral support. He warned them that East Bengal was bound to be the next scene of trouble and he asked them to prepare themselves to face it. He told them, 'If you want independence, you must learn to defend yourselves, and your neighbours and other helpless people. You should not run to the Army or the police for protection.

The question might be asked: "If they were helpless, why did they not resign?" He wanted them to understand that the British Government was on the Muslim League side. The British and the Muslim League were friends in need and now that the British knew they could not possible stay here longer, they wanted to help their friends, the Muslim League. If only in order to counteract the effect of this alliance, it was necessary for the Congress to stay on in the Government. "We can break this Government at any moment. But we shall break it only after blackening the face of the British everywhere."

Refering to the Calcutta killing Sardar Patel observed tkat he had hoped that when those who started it had the balance-sheet before them, they would realise that blood-shed did not pay. But more bloodshed and other crimes started in East Bengal. He did not accept the theory that it was the work of goondas. It was not the work of goondas but was a game played to achieve political ends. Worse than killing were forcible conversions.

"Even the death of thirty lakhs of people in the Bengal famine did not grieve me so much as these forcible conversions. Death is any day preferable to forcible conversion. But did any Muslim leader raise his voice against these forcible conversions?"

Two or three Muslims among the delegates stood up at this point to object to the statement that no Muslim leaders had protested against forcible conversions.

Sardar Patel said that all the remarks he had made were against Muslim League leaders.

The interrupters suggested that the speaker should mention the *Muslim League* and not Muslim in general terms.

Sardar Patel went on to refer to Mahatma Gandhi's efforts in East Bengal and said there could, however, be no peace unless those who disturbed the peace suffered and felt the agony.

Transfer of Population

After Bihar, the League was suggesting transference of population. "You are welcome to it. But remember this was what Hitler tried to do, And if you do it the same fate that overtook Hitler will overtake you." Sardar Patel appealed in God's name for a stoppage of the disturbances because the disturbances were not only doing harm to the country but were bringing India's name into disrepute abroad. "Whatever you do, do it by the method of peace and love. You may succeed. But the sword will be met by the sword (cheers). Pakistan cannot be achieved by the sword or by bloodshed (cheers). If you want to get Pakistan by this means, then there will be no peace in India." The only thing for the League to do was to cancel the Bombay resolution and if that was not done, there was no place for the League in the Interim Government.

Sardar Patel gave a warning to the public servants who did not work faithfully and said there would be no alternative but to get rid of them.

The British Government was going away. Even if we fought among ourselves they were going quickly. The only thing was that if we fought they could point the finger of scorn at us and say "you wanted us to quit and you see the result."

Sardar Patel closed with an appeal to people to use violence if necessary in self-defence and not to do violence to others.

Mrs. Asaf Ali's Opposition

Mrs. *Aruna Asaf Ali*, who opposed the resolution, was received with great cheering. She declared that after three and a half years of underground activity she had looked forward to a Congress session held to ratify a revolutionary programme and not to ratify a programme of constitutionalism. We should have met to-day to approve a complete abandonment of the path of compromise (cheers). She referred to Tilak, Gandhi and other personalities and said that revolutionaries like them had succeeded every time they came into conflict with orthodox Congressmen. Only recently had there been no victory of the revolutionaries.

Pandit Nehru's speech, she said, was a portrayal of the actual position of the Interim National Government. It was really neither national nor a Government and it was likely to cease to be interim. It was not national because, according to Pandit Nehru, there was a King's party in it; it was not a Government because it had failed to deal with Bengal.

She welcomed Sardar Patel's forthright declaration that the sword must be met by the sword. She and others of her way of thinking had never subscribed to non-violence, but if the sword was to be used it must be used against the British.

Opposing Sardar Patel's resolution, *Hakim Abdul Jalal Nadvi* of the Frontier Province strongly criticised the spirit of Sardar's speech. He said it was Jinnah-like, since it encouraged civil strife in the country. The Sardar had advised people not to depend on Government agency and protect themselves against aggression by others. The speaker said Congressmen were wedded to non-violence and fought the forces of the British by non-violent means. How then could they raise their hands against their own brethren? (Cheers). He complained that the Sardar's speech advocated violence and said if Congress proposed to change its creed of non-violence, let it be openly declared. (More Cheers).

Sardar Patel, replying, reiterated his conviction that the sword must be met by the sword. Mahatma Gandhi had said that it was better to use violence than to be a coward. Non-violence, said Sardar Patel, was a weapon which it was beyond the power of ordinary men to use and therefore he urged people to adopt violence in self-defence and only in self-defence or in defence of neighbours. He gave this advice, because there was no Government at the Centre at present. The present Central Government during the transference of power was in a stage of paralysis. (Laughter).

As regards revolutionary spirit, Sardar Patel said some people deceived themselves by imagining that they were bringing about revolution. This was like the dog in the fable, which while walking under a heavily loaded cart, imagined that the cart would not move if it stopped. (Loud laughter). Revolution could only be brought about by hard organised work. He denied that by being in the Interim Government, they were co-operating with the British Government. The British were quitting and were we co-operating with them if we helped them to pack their belongings? (Laughter).

In an appeal to Bengal, Sardar Patel said that that province had been his inspiration since childhood. It had given the lead to the rest of India, but he called upon Bengalis to close their ranks and help themselves and he assured them that the whole of India would then support them.

The resolution was passed.

INDIA'S FUTURE CONSTITUTION

The Congress passed the last resolution of the day on *Acharya Narendra Deo's* motion. The resolution declared the Congress stand for an Independent Sovereign Republic on the eve of the summoning of the Constituent Assembly. Acharya Narendra Deo was supported by Rao Saheb Patwardhan and opposed by Mr. Suresh Chandra Misra, and the resolution was adopted unanimously. The House then adjourned.

2nd day—Meerut—24th November 1946

INDIAN STATES' PROBLEM

When the open session of the Congress was resumed this afternoon, Dr. *Pattabhi Sitaramayya*, President, All-India States' People's Conference, moving the resolution on Indian States, adopted two days earlier by the Subjects Committee, stated that he had seen a confidential document indicating a move to form a Confederation of 562 Indian States in order to negotiate with the future Central Government.

Dr. Pattabhi referred to the other scheme for the merger of a number of these States and said that this attempt was in no way in the interests of the people: it was not being made with their consent, but merely in consultation among the Princes themselves. He warned the Princes that this kind of merger would lead us nowhere, but would make the problem more intractable.

Dr. Pattabhi declared that the people of the States would never recognise the Negotiating Committee unless their representatives were included in it.

The time had come, he said, when the Congress could no longer ignore the problem of the States, but what our next step should be was a matter which could only be decided after full consideration. Freedom should not come to only one part of the country: the whole of India should get it.

Though the States, in general, were still carrying on in their reactionary way, yet, as zamindars who were once reactionary, were now anxious for an equitable settlement. Princes also would before long come to similar reasonable frame of mind.

Mr. *Balvantrai Mehta*, seconding the motion, referred to the move for a Confederation and declared that any such scheme, promoted without the consent of the people, would not succeed. In his view, the only way to fight reaction was to organise the people of the States on the lines of the Congress. Not only the Princes, but the Political Department stood in the way of progress. The Political Department prevented any settlement between the Princes and their people.

Mr. *Ashok Mehta* (Socialist) moved an amendment, previously placed before the Subjects Committee by Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali. It sought to extend unstinted moral support to the peoples of Kashmir, Travancore and other States who had been subjected to repression and had organised movements of resistance.

Mr. Ashok Mehta said that the Princes were as much a King's Party as the Muslim League was in the Interim Government. Today, the people of Hyderabad, Kashmir, and other States were ready for their struggle and were waiting for orders from the Congress. He urged the Congress to send out its orders for this purpose.

Mr. *Achyut Patwardhan* supported the amendment and expressed disagreement with Sardar Patel's statement yesterday that the fight remained unfinished, particularly against the Political Department. The problems of the States could not be settled directly with the Princes who were guided by the Political Department.

He complained that Congress leaders were not giving proper advice to the people of States beyond exhorting them to be patient although the Congress had expressed sympathy with far away Spain. It was imperative, he said, that Congress should categorically declare wholehearted and unstinted support to States' Peoples.

Mr. *Jwala Prasad* moved a further amendment seeking to extend active support of the Congress to the effort of the people of the States to establish Responsible Government as an integral part of a free and independent India.

PANDIT NEHRU'S REPLY TO CRITICISMS

Pandit Nehru vigorously refuted the statements made by some of the earlier speakers that the Congress had not given suport to the people of the States. He was amazed that there should be anyone who could make such statements. The Praja Mandals and the States' people's Conference owed their origin to the interest taken by the Congress. He admitted having advised the people of the Hyderabad State not to launch any struggle in the State.

That was in his capacity as President of the State's People's Conference and that advice was given in the light of the present delicate situation in the country as a whole but the people of the States were perfectly at liberty to act upon his advice or reject it. Mr. *Jwla Prasad* withdrew his amendment and Mr. *Ashok Mehta's* amendment was rejected.

The resolution was passsed unanimously.

CONGRESS MANIFESTO

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain* moved the resolution on the Congress manifesto. He urged the President of the Congress to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee soon which should continue for about a week to settle the mandate to be given to Congress representatives in the Constituent Assembly. He urged that members of the A. I. C. C. and not the Congress members of the Constituent Assembly who were competent to decide the shape of Swaraj in the light of the Congress manifesto. Earlier speakers had said that a section of Congressmen did not approve the Socialist form of Government. But his resolution embodied ideals which were acceptable both to Gandhites and Socialists alike. The Congress election manifesto which was adopted by the resolution aimed *inter alia* at removing the curse of poverty and of raising the standard of living.

Mr. *N. G. Ranga*, seconding the resolution, described it as the culmination of the organic growth of the political ideology and of practice of the Indian National Congress under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. Many of its features were contained in the Congress election manifesto but he knew from bitter experience how difficult it was to make many of our legislators—like legislators all over the world—to keep election pledges. It should now be the duty of the Congress Working Committee and the Congress President to see that the Congress parties in the various legislatures enforced the manifesto loyally and zealously. The manifesto, said Prof Ranga, showed that the Congress stood not only for political democracy but also for economic and social democracy.

Mr. *Mathra Prasad Misra* moved an amendment suggesting the adoption of the principles and programme not only of the Election manifesto but also of the August Revolution.

Mr. *Shankar Rao Deo* held that the resolution represented a synthesis of Gandhism and Socialism. Mahatma Gandhi believed in equality in a practical form and unlike other great men who had accepted the ideal of spiritual democracy the Mahatma believed in giving practical shape to the ideal.

Mr. *Jai Prakash Narain* in a brief reply said that whether the resolution recognised any "ism" or not, it was clear it had brought people of different shades of opinion on the same platform.

Mr. *Mathra Prasad Misra's* amendment was adopted and the resolution as amended was passed.

Rajen Babu's Appeal to Congressmen

Dr: *Rajendra Prasad* moved the resolution on the communal situation. He said the happenings in the country were such as to make us hang our heads down in shame. It was the duty of every Congressmen to stop them and to carry the message of harmony to the furthest corner. It was unfortunate that while Indians had exercised self-restraint in carrying on their fight with the foreign Government they should have lost self-control in dealing with their domestic differences. He recognised that when one side preached violence, it became difficult for the other side to defend itself with non-violence. But there could be no excuse for retaliation which brought misery to the innocent. He urged that immediate attention be given to bringing relief to the victims of the riots.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, seconding the resolution, urged that the Congress should now squarely face up to the communal situation or perish. It was true that communal riots had occurred in the past and to our misfortune had recurred at frequent intervals. Occasional sparks had now started a forest fire, threatening to consume all of us. The Congress had a special responsibility in dealing with the present situation. "If you are a part of the Congress, you do not give up your faith. But whether you are a Hindu or a Muslim, you must share the blame or the credit for whatever happens." The first thing that every Congressman—Hindu and Muslim—should do was to look inwards and up to himself the question: "Am I free from bitterness in my mind"?

"Though we feel helpless in the face of the situation, we must remember that the only organisation that can deal with it is the Congress. As a national organisation it constitutes in itself the antidote to the present malady. If the Congress fails to live up to its own ideals and eradicate this communal canker, then it will disintegrate and vanish." The Congress should bear the burden of protecting all. To the Congressmen, it should not matter whether it was a Hindu or a Muslim who was in danger. We should remember that the Congress insisted on having a Muslim in the Cabinet even at the sacrifice of a Hindu seat, in order to live up to its ideal of a national, non-communal organisation. If Congresmen in East Bengal had stood fast by their true ideals, as they should have done, the tragedy there would not have occurred, as it did. In Bihar, wherever Congressmen worked for the restoration of peace, the disturbances subsided. He had himself heard Muslims express surprise at the suddenness with which the trouble stopped in parts of Bihar as soon as Congressmen exerted their influence.

Pandit Nehru on Bihar Incidents

Supporting the resolution, *Pandit Nehru* referred to a note which he had received yesterday in the Congress session from a delegate holding Pandit Nehru responsible for thousands of Hindu lives lost in Bihar as a result of alleged air bombing. Pandit Nehru categorically denied reports of bombing in Bihar during the disturbances and described the circumstances under which about 24 men of a Madras Regiment came to a clash on half a dozen occasions with a crowd of 2,500 Hindus who were involved in a pitched battle with 1,200 Muslims in a place called Nagarnosa. The Regiment was entrusted with the task of evacuating 1,200 Muslims to a place of safety. According to Army sources, about forty people were killed but unofficial sources estimated the death roll between fifty and sixty.

His enquiry revealed that in the communal clashes at Nagarnosa about 25 Muslims and between ten and fifteen Hindus were killed in three days' clashes. He was shocked at the exaggerated figures of casualties in Bihar circulated by interested parties.

CRITICISM OF LEAGUE POLICY

Pandit Nehru traced the genesis of the communal trouble in the country and the deterioration that had occurred in the last ten years. He said that the Muslim League adopted Fascist tactics. Their strategy was based on the Hitlerian technique and had many things in common with Hitler's methods. Muslim League leaders like Hitler indulged in a hymn of hatred and violence The League had no constructive or economic programme for the country or for the Muslim masses. The League had never clarified their position because its leaders had always shelved discussion of questions which might falsify their claims to represent all sections of the Muslim population.

Pandit Nehru said a prominent member of the League Council told him that he once asked Mr. Jinnah to place the League's constructive programme before the Muslim masses, but Mr. Jinnah replied that any such programme would lead to differences and disruption in the Muslim League ranks. Hatred of Hindus was a uniting force. Mr. Jinnah said: "The programme of the League was to preach hatred against the Congress and Hindus."

CONGRESS WILL NOT SHIRK ITS RESPONSIBILITY

Pandit Nehru went on: "I am not afraid of bloodshed. The present civil strife in the country has no doubt moved me, but it has to be faced with a brave heart. I hope the situation will improve. It is true that incidents in one part of the country have repercussion in other parts Congress has faced many a danger in the past and will not shirk its responsibility in a crisis like this even though some of us may have to lose our lives."

Pandit Nehru declared that the Fascist policy of the League was giving birth to a rival fascism which he termed "Hindu fascism." All types of fascism exploited the name of religion and his fear was that the growing Hindu fascism possessed all the dangerous potentialities of Muslim League fascism. Both were the enemies of the unity and progress of India. Congress, Pandit Nehru said, had liquidated British fascism and it was his conviction that it would similarly deal with the two-pronged Indian fascism which threatened to wipe out our culture and civilisation.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, supporting the resolution, said that whatever wrongs were done either by Hindus or Muslims were entered in Congress account. In fact, however, the Congress could not know or foresee every disturbance, particularly when, as at the time of the recent disturbances, Congressmen were busy with other affairs. In his view, communal organisations in the country which carried on poisonous propaganda were responsible for the present situation. But such poisonous propaganda did its work because Congressmen were not alert enough to counteract it. Unfortunately, there were only a few Muslims in the Congress and therefore the Congress could not reach the Muslim masses. If we had the leaders to go to the Muslim masses with the message of peace and love and goodwill trouble would not have occurred. Nevertheless, the Congress should win over all those who had turned away from it. We should prevent the drift towards Fascism, which the Fascism of the Muslim League with its emphasis on the philosophy of hatred and violence had, according to Pandit Nehru, set in motion among other sections of the people. The Congress had taken the responsibility of achieving independence. It must win back those who had gone astray. He was sure it could succeed.

POSITION IN N.W.F.P.

Referring to his Province he said that it was by non violence that it had been saved. If there was one spark of violence in that province from the side of the Khudai Khidmatgar or the Congress, he did not know what would have happened. The British Government was bent upon creating mischif and had worked hard to create mischief. It had backed the League and invited it to carry on propaganda among the tribesmen, while Congressmen were forbidden from entering the area. He requested the Interim Government to give them permission to contact the tribesmen and counteract this poisonous propaganda. The Congress Ministry in the Provinces had responsibility without power. The Premier of the Province had arranged for the visits of the Vice-President of the Interim Government and also its President (the Viceroy) and the difference in the reception given to them demonstrated the truth of his statement about responsibility without power.

A series of amendments were ruled out or rejected and the resolution was passed.

The last resolution of the session namely, one on amendments to the Constitution was put from the Chair and adopted.

GREETINGS TO INDONESIA

The session adopted three resolutions put from the Chair by Acharya Kripalani, one on South Africa, the second on East Africa, and the third conveying greetings to Indonesia. These had been adopted by the Subject Committee on Thursday.

In his concluding speech, *Acharya Kripalani* again made a fervent appeal for communal unity. (see p. 124). The Congress session then terminated.

Mr. Jinnah's Cure for Communal Troubles

Addressing a Press Conference at Karachi on the 25th November, Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the all-India Muslim League, said:

"In view of the horrible slaughters in various parts of India, I am of opinion that the authorities, both central and provincial, should take up immediately the question of exchange of population to avoid brutal recurrence of incidents which had taken place where small minorities have been butchered by overwhelming majorities."

Mr. Jinnah made this statement in reply to a question seeking proposals for the restoration of a peceful atmosphere in India.

Mr. Jinnah added: "The Viceroy—because he alone can do it—as the Representative of the Crown and the Governor-General with the powers that are vested in him should adopt every means and measure to restore firstly peace and order. In the present conditions there is no room, intelligence and fair play. Negotiations in these conditions can hardly yield fruitful results and produce a settlement satisfactory to both parties."

ATTITUDE TO LONG-TERM PLAN

In reply to a question about the acceptance of the long-term plan of the British Cabinet Mission by the Muslim League, as a condition precedent to their entry in the Interim Government mentioned in the Viceroy's letter to Pandit Nehru, Mr. Jinnah said: "It is quite clear as I have already said, that the Congress has not and never had accepted the long-term plan embodied in the statement of the Cabinet Mission of May 16, and clarified by their statement of May 25. Pandit Jawahalal Nehru himself has made it clear in his letter to Mr Gopinath Bardoloi, which I quoted in my letter to the Viceroy, and so has Mr. Gandhi. These pronouncements were made as recently as September 30 and October 23. Further, I have never for a single moment conveyed to the Viceroy anything, by way of assurance or otherwise, except that the long-term plan could only be considered and decided by the Council of the All-India Muslim League. From the very beginning until we nominated our five representatives, I told the Viceroy that the settlement of the long term plan could only be taken up when a proper friendly atmosphere was created between the two major organisations. The Congress has not budged aninch and the Viceroy repeatedly made it clear to me that it was no use discussing this matter further with any hope of persuading the Congress to make an unequivocal statement accepting the long-term plan as embodied in the statements of May 16 and 25.

Questioned what the Muslim League proposed to do with regard to the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Jinnah remarked: "We hope we shall be able to live. But I do not see how any one could have persisted in his idea to go on with the constituent Assembly in these circumstances and more especially in the terribly explosive atmosphere that has been created by the wholesale massacre in the different parts of the country and particularly in Bihar. It is sheer recklessness and folly to pursue this path and I regret to say that the Congress leaders and the Congress annual session at Meerut have done their best to add more fuel to the fire."

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOT A CABINET

Mr. Jinnah referred to the speeches made at the Meerut session of the Congress and said: "As regards the recent fulminations of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru against the Muslim League and false accusations, I can only say that there is not an iota of foundation for it. Pandit Nehru in assuming office took two oaths.

one of them was an oath of allegiance to the King-Emperor and he was playing to the gallery when he calls us the King's Party and accuses that we are helping the imperialistic British Government. It is utterly untrue. Secondly, even a man of the meanest intelligence can understand that he himself took the oath and was sworn-in in a categorical manner as Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General. It is as plain as pikestaff and it has been repeatedly made clear especially in the broadcast of the Viceroy on September 2, that he has formed this Interim Government under the present constitution, the Act of 1919, which is in operation. He also made it clear that he would give maximum freedom to the Members of the Executive Council in the day-to-day administration. It is sheer flight of imagination and fiction to call it a Cabinet, a National Government, or even a Coalition. Even the Congress Working Committee is called a Cabinet and some time I see in some quarters the Muslim League Working Committee is called a Cabinet. By giving a name, yot do not make it a Cabinet in the constitutional or legal sense. Nor can you vest it with the powers of a real Cabinet by indulging in fiction, myth and imagination."

Continuing, Mr. Jinnah said: "It is obvious that members of the Executive Council have been selected community wise. It can therefore only function in terms of the Government of India Act of 1919 so far as the day-to-day administration is concerned. Such limited powers and opportunities as there are in the day to-day administration can be utilised for the good of the peoples generally. We have gone there only for that purpose, but here comes the wishful thinking of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He wants to shut his eyes in ostrich-like manner and think that the Government of India Act of 1919 does not exist. In the flight of his imagination he thinks this truly National Government responsible to the people and the electorate. Not only he imagines that he can function in that way, but he expects everybody else to do so. The real truth is that if he can only come down to the earth and think coolly and calmly he must understand that he is neither the Prime Minister nor is it a Nehru Government, he is only a member of the External Affairs and Commonwealth Department.

"LEAGUE NOMINEES WILL NOT BE SUBSERVIENT TO CONGRESS

Mr. Jinnah added: "So long as Pandit Nehru and the Congress think that by the instrumentality of such powers as are vested in the Interim Government, by means of his majority or by machination and manoeuvres, they can torpedo the Pakistan demand or do things bit by bit which will prejudice or militate against a settlement of the future constitution, the Muslim League must resist every step and every measure that is taken with an eye to make more and more difficult the settlement of the future constitution. Pandit Nehru and the Congress expect the Muslim League nominees or the Muslim League to act according to their orders as a subservient body. That again is an impossible position for us to accept. We cannot take orders either from Pandit Nehru or from the Congress, and so long as the policy of the Congress is to torpedo the Pakistan demand both by working inside the Executive Council and outside, and so long as the Congress does not recognise the Muslim League on a completely equal footing, it is difficult for us not to resist and combat the first and as to the second we cannot be expected to occupy a subservient or subordinate position under the Congress.

When his attention was drawn to the fact that the Viceroy himself had called it a Cabinet in his official correspondence, Mr. Jinnah remarked: "Yes, the Viceroy was pressed that it is no use calling it an Interim Government and Pandit Nehru was very keen on this word "Cabinet". And the Viceroy saw no real objection if it pleased Pandit Nehru when they assumed office. Little things please little minds and you cannot turn a donkey into an elephant by calling it an elephant.

Asked by a pressman about his reaction to Sarder Patel's speech at the Meerut session of the Congress, Mr. Jinnah said: "Sarder Patel is a strong man, as they said, and therefore he uses strong language but words do not break bones. If he means by using the phrase 'the sword will be met with the sword" that the minorities should be butchered by the majority all over India, it is an appalling prospect. All I can say is that he does not seem to realise that any one who encourages this sort of thing is the greatest enemy of every community. Where has Sarder Patel got his sword? The Congress Ministries and those who are sitting now as members of the Executive Council will not be able to function if they were not under the protection of the British bayonet."

SIND'S PROBLEM

Speaking about his visit to Sind, Mr. Jinnah said :

I have come to Sind to help the Muslim League in every way I can to fight these elections. I have just arrived and I have not yet been able to decide as to my programme but we are determined to win every seat. Cent per cent is our target and I will do all I can to achieve that result. Then alone could you have a stable Government is Sind which, I think, is the only hope for Sind. It is not only unwise but dangerous in this province that efforts should be made to disrupt the Mussalmans and set up a puppet Muslim Premier and Ministers who will act as marionettes according to the wishes of the Hindus whose votes and support only can keep them in their position. I appeal to every sensible man belonging to other communities not to encourage this in order to disrupt Mussalmans by various methods."

In conclusion, Mr. Jinnah spoke of the Muslim League's attitude to the minorities and said : "I want to repeat and emphasise that we shall not depart from the cardinal principle of the Muslim League of giving every safeguard and protection to the minorities and the Muslim League and myself will deal with the minorities in Sind and elsewhere in the fairest possible manner. I would impress upon every one that if you wish Sind to prosper and if you really desire the true welfare and progress of all communities in Sind, there is only one way and that is be fair to each other and establish a spirit of co-operation and harmony so that we may work together for the man in the street who is often forgotten.

British Cabinet's Invitation to Party Leaders

On the 26th November the British Cabinet invited the Viceroy Lord Wavell and five members of the Interim Government—two Congress representatives and two Muslim League representatives and one Sikh—to London to discuss the basis of the forthcoming meeting of the Indian Constituent Assembly.

This step was taken in view of the difficulties that had arisen in connection with the participation of the Muslim League in the Constituent Assembly which was summoned to meet at Delhi on the 9th December.

This was announced in both the Houses of Parliament Lord Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Lords "the purpose of the proposed discussion is to endeavour to reach a common understanding between the two major parties on which the works of the Constituent Assembly can proceed with the co-operation of all parties."

Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel communicated to the Viceroy the Congress decision not to accept the Cabinet's invitation. Mr. M. A. Jinnah however announced the formal acceptance of the Muslim League Party to accept the invitation and to visit U. K. for discussion.

This led to a series of correpondence and on the 29th November, in response to a personal appeal from Mr Attlee and on assurance that no modification would be made in the British proposal, Pandit Nehru decided to go to London for talks. The following is the text of the correspondence that was released to the press.

Nehru-Viceroy-Attlee Correspondence

NEHRU'S LETTER TO VICEROY

Pandit Nehru's letter to the Viceroy, dated November 26 :

Dear Lord Wavell,

With reference to our conversation to-day, in the course of which you conveyed H. M. G.'s invitation to some of us to visit London this week, I have consulted my colleagues and we have given careful thought to the proposal. I need hardly say that we are grateful to H. M. G. for their invitation, but we feel we cannot, at this stage, go to London. We would be agreeable to consultations with the representatives of the British Government in India.

It would appear that the proposal involves a reopening and a reconsideration of the various decisions arrived at since the visit of the British Cabinet Delegation to India. The Muslim League accepted places in the Government on the very clear understanding that they also accepted the long-term proposals contained in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. Indeed, they could not join the Government otherwise. But now, the League have announced very definitely that they will not participate in the Constituent Assembly. We attach, as you are aware, great importance to the holding of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed, namely, December 9. The invitation to us to go to London appears to us to reopen the whole problem which was settled to a large extent by the Cabinet Mission's statement and the formation of the Interim Government. Any impression in the public mind that these decisions are reopened would, in our opinion, be fatal.

It was because we felt that it was necessary in the public interest to emphasise that problems have been finally settled that we insisted on the holding of the Constituent Assembly on the date fixed for it. Even this date, it must be remembered, was given months after the election of the members. Any further postponement in the present context would, in all probability, result in the abandonment of the plan and create a feeling of uncertainty all round which is not only undesirable but actually at the present juncture, would encourage various forms of violent propaganda.

It is difficult enough at this stage for us to leave the country even for a short while We have also to prepare for the Constituent Assembly meeting which will take place in less than two weeks. If any useful purpose would have been served by our going out now, we should have done so in spite of these difficulties. We are convinced, however, that our leaving India now would mean that at the instance of the League the Cabinet Mission's plan is going to be abandoned or substantially varied and that we are parties to it. It would mean giving in to the League's intransigence and incitement to violence and this would have disastrous consequences. The first thing to be certain about is that plans agreed to will be implemented and that there will be a continuity about policy. There has been suspicion enough. Any addition to it will wreck the whole scheme and make it difficult to replace it by another. We feel, therefore, that we cannot, at this stage, proceed to London, but we would welcome, whenever necessary, consultations with the representatives of the British Government in India. A brief visit now on our part to England cannot bear fruit. It is likely to have a contrary result. We, therefore, regret we are unable to accept H. M. G.'s invitation conveyed to us through you. I trust you will convey the contents of this letter to H. M. G.—Yours sincerely (Sd.) Jawaharlal Nehru.

PREMIER'S APPEAL TO NEHRU

The following cablegram dated November 27, 1946, was received by H. E. the Viceroy from the Secretary of State :

Please convey the following to Jawaharlal Nehru from Prime Minister: "I very much hope that you will agree to come to London since it is not possible at the present time for me and my colleagues who have already been absent more than three months on Indian affairs this year to go to India. The object of our talks would be to ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December 9. There is no intention of abandoning either decision of the Assembly to meet or the plan put forward by the Cabinet Delegation It is our desire to see that this implemented in full and not any desire to abandon or alter it that has prompted us to ask you and your colleagues to come to London. All three members of the Cabinet Delegation individually and collectively have asked me to urge upon you the supreme importance of this opportunity of our meeting and discussing the situation before any further untoward actions take place in India. We ask you to help in this way to make rapid and smooth progress towards the goal of Indian freedom, an objective which we share wholeheartedly with the people of India."

NEHRU'S REPLY

On November 28, 1946, H. E. the Viceroy sent the Secretary of State the following cablegram:

Please convey the following message to the Prime Minister from Jawharlal Nehru:

I am grateful to you for your message and appreciate your desire to ensure a successful meeting of the Constituent Assembly on December 9 and onwards. We are all anxious that the Constituent Assembly should meet on the date fixed and should proceed harmoniously to fulfil its task and we shall do our utmost to this end in co-operation with others. As we have repeatedly stated we accept the Cabinet Delegation's plan in its entirety. In regard to certain interpretation, we made our position perfectly clear to the Delegation and we have proceeded accordingly since then. We have further stated that in the event of different interpretations, the matter should be referred to the Federal Court and we shall abide by the Court's decision. It appears from the statements made on behalf of the British Government in Parliament yesterday, that the only point to be considered is this interpretation. In regard to this, our position is quite clear and we are completely committed to it. We are unable to change it and we have no authority to do so. Hence our visiting London for this purpose is not necessary. The first session of the Constituent Assembly will deal with matters of procedure and appointment of committees. The question of interpretation as regards subsequent activities will not arise at this stage. It is, therefore, easily possible for all to co-operate in this session and, if the necessity arises, to refer any matter over which agreement has not been reached to the Federal Court.

It would be more suitable and convenient for us to visit London if necessary after the first brief session of the Constituent Assembly. This would allow more time for consultations.

In view of these considerations and also because of the great difficulty in leaving India at present we feel that our visit to London now would serve no useful purpose; but if in spite of this or because you wish to consider other matters you desire us to come, we shall endevour to do so. But we shall have to return by December 9 in time for the Constituent Assembly.

On November 28, H. E. the Viceroy received the following cable from the Secretary of State:

"Your telegram. Please convey following reply from Prime Minister to Pandit Jawharlal Nehru: Thank you for your message. I note what you say about position of Congress, but none the less we feel that a visit by you before Constituent Assembly meets would be of great value and we appreciate your willingness to meet us in this matter. Arrangements will be made to enable you to return by December 9."

ATTLEE'S "ASSURANCE" TO JINNAH

After Mr. Attlee's message to Pandit Jawharlal Nehru was published in the Press, Mr. M. A. Jinnah sent the following telegram to Mr. Attlee:

"Your message to Pandit Nehru without disclosing his communication to you delivered to me at 9 to-night (November 29) is a new position after we have accepted invitation to go to London. We cannot agree to confine only to matters mentioned in your message to Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in the light of what has already taken place which has created entirely new situation. Unless it is open to us to discuss whole situation it will be no use my going to London. Please wire clarify position immediately."

Mr. Jinnah received the following reply from Mr. Attlee on the 30 November:

"I trust that you will come to London. Your refusal must be based on misunderstanding of my telegrams to Nehru. There is nothing in it to prejudice full consideration of all points of view."

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, accepting the invitation, wired back as follows:

"I thank you for your message received this morning. After your clarification and assurances I have decided to leave for London to-morrow.

On the 1st December the Viceroy Lord Wavell accompanied by Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Muslim League President, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Finance Member and Sardar Baldev Singh, Defence Member left

Karachi by Air for London. They arrived at London on the 3rd December and had a series of talks and conferences with his Majesty's Government till the 6th December when it concluded but failed to achieve immediate results. The following statement was issued by his Majesty's Government :

British Cabinet's 6th December Statement on Grouping

"The conversations held by his Majesty's Government with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan and Sardar Baladev Singh came to an end this evening as Pandit Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh are returning to India to-morrow morning.

"The object of the conversations has been to obtain the participation and co-operation of all parties in the Constituent Assembly. It is not expected that any final settlement could be arrived at since the Indian representatives must consult their colleagues before any final decision is reached.

GROUPING CLAUSES OF CABINET PLAN

"The main difficulty that has arisen has been over the interpretation of Paragraph 19. (5) and (8) of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, relating to meetings in Sections, which runs as follows :

19 (5) : These Sections shall proceed to settle Provincial constitutions for the Provinces included in each section and shall also decide whether any Group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and, if so, with what provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces should have the power to opt out of the Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (8) below :

Paragraph 19 (8) : As soon as the new constitutional agreements have come into operation, it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the Legislature of the Province after the first General Election under the new Constitution.

BRITISH GOVT'S INTERPRETATION

"The Cabinet Mission have throughout maintained the view that the decisions of the sections should, in the absence of an agreement to the contrary, be taken by a simple majority vote of the representatives in the Sections. This view has been accepted by the Muslim League, but the Congress have put forward a different view. They have asserted that the true meaning of the Statement, read as a whole, is that the Provinces have the right to decide both as to Grouping and as to their own constitutions.

"His Majesty's Government have had legal advice which confirms that the Statement of May 16 means what the Cabinet Mission have always stated was their intentions. This part of the Statement, as so interpreted, must, therefore, be considered an esential part of the scheme of May 16 for enabling the Indian people to formulate a constitution which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to submit to Parliament. It should, therefore, be accepted by all parties in the Constituent Assembly.

"It is however, clear that other questions of interpretation of the statement of May 16 may arise and His Majesty's Government hope that if the Council of the Muslim League are able to agree to participate in the Constituent Assembly, they will also agree, as have the Congress, that the Federal Court should be asked to decide matters of interpretation that may be referred to them by either side and will accept such a decision, so that the procedure both in the Union Constituent Assembly and in the Sections may accord with the Cabinet Mission's plan.

REFERENCE TO FEDERAL COURT PROVIDED FOR

"On the matter immediately in dispute, His Majesty's Government urge the Congress to accept the view of the Cabinet Mission in order that a way may be opened for the Muslim League to reconsider their attitude. If, in spite of this reaffirmation of the intention of the Cabinet Mission, the Constituent Assembly desires that this fundamental point should be referred for a decision of the Federal Court, such a reference should be made at a very early date. It will then be reasonable that the meetings of the Sections of the Constituent Assembly should be postponed until the decision of the Federal Court is known.

"There has never been any prospect of success for the Constituent Assembly except upon the basis of agreed procedure. Should the constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government could not, of course, contemplate—as the Congress have stated they would not contemplate—forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country."

Statement in the House of Lords

Mr. *Winston Churchill* created a surprise in the House of Commons on the **11th December** when he forced a debate on India. The Government agreed to this taking place on Thursday and Friday. Mr. *Jinnah* was present in the House to hear the Prime Minister making his statement, but Mr. *Attlee*, who had a bad cold, could scarcely be heard in the visitors' gallery.

Mr. *Attlee* had stated that they felt that a general debate on Indian affairs at the present time would be inopportune and might destroy the prospect of a settlement, but Mr. Churchill pressing for an immediate debate, said that as things were assuming a grave aspect it was necessary for the nation to have its attention concentrated upon them.

He said: "His Majesty's Opposition have shown over long months great forbearance and restraint in not raising a debate upon India, but I must give the Leader of the House notice that we feel that a debate must now take place. I ask that the pledge, which was given to us for a full two-day debate, should be made good before we separate for Christmas."

Mr. Churchill added that he made his request after grave reflection, and Mr. Morrison, Leader of the House, said that in view of that the Government did not feel that they could refuse a debate.

Earlier in the House of Lords, the *Secretary of State* for India, made an identical statement. *Lord Pethick-Lawrence* opened his statement by saying: "The House will have seen that the conversations with the Indian leaders which took place during last week have unfortunately ended without agreement being achieved. As the House knows, the Government issued a statement at the conclusion of the conversations, but members will no doubt wish to have some account of the present situation.

"It will be remembered that on May 16 last, the Cabinet Mission made proposals which, it was hoped, would bridge the gap between the Hindu and Muslim points of view and enable the Indians to frame their own constitution by accepting democratic methods of a Constituent Assembly.

"In order to provide the most hopeful basis for co-operation in constitution-making, the Cabinet Mission found it necessary to recommend both the outline of a future constitution for India and the particular procedure by which details might be elaborated. The essence of their proposals was that, while there would be a union of India limited to foreign affairs, defence and communications, there would be opportunity by the adoption of a particular procedure in the Constituent Assembly for the provinces to form groups for the administration of such subjects as was decided should be dealt with in common.

DIVISION INTO SECTIONS

"To provide this opportunity, the Mission proposed that the Constituent Assembly, after the preliminary meeting to decide the order of business, should divide up into sections, two of which cover the provinces which the Muslim League claims should constitute Pakistan. These sections would settle the provincial constitutions and decide whether a group constitution should be framed for the provinces within a section and, if so, for what subjects. Individual provinces would be free to opt out of a group after the first election under the new constitution. The intention of the Mission was that the decisions of sections should be taken by a majority vote.

"Subsequently, difference of opinion developed between the Congress Party and the Muslim League as to the meaning of the Cabinet Mission's statement on the question of procedure within the sections of the Constituent Assembly, and it was largely because of misgivings in regard to this that the Muslim League withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's plan at the end of July last.

"The Congress view is that the provinces have the right to decide both as to grouping and as to their own constitution and that therefore decisions of sections cannot be by a simple majority vote. The Congress, however, have stated that they are prepared to accept the ruling of the Federal Court as to the proper interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's statement.

"It was mainly in the hope of resolving the difference of view on this matter that the British Government invited the Indian representatives to come to London, We had very full and friendly discussions with the Indian representatives, but I regret to say that up to the present we have not succeeded in resolving this difficulty. Consequently, the Constituent Assembly which was summoned to meet in India last Monday is holding its preliminary session without representation of the Muslim League.

LEAGUE ADVICE

"In the statement which the Government issued at the conclusion of the conversations, we have said that we have had legal advice which confirms that the statement of May 16 means what the Cabinet Mission have always said was their intention, namely, that voting in sections should be by a majority vote. This is the view which is accepted by the Muslim League and on the basis of which they originally accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposal. From their point of view, this is an essential element in the plan, because if agreement of all the provinces within a section is required to the framing of a group constitution, it is probable that the opposition of some of the smaller provinces will prevent group constitutions being framed.

"The intention of the Cabinet Mission was that while an individual province might be outvoted in a section, its freedom would be safeguarded by the right to opt out of a group after the constitution had been framed. HMG feel that all parties of the Constituent Assembly should agree to work the scheme in the way intended by the Cabinet Mission, but if the Constituent Assembly desires that this fundamental point should be referred for a decision to the Federal Court, such reference should be made at a very early date so that its decision can be known before the meetings of the sections of the Constituent Assembly take place.

"It may seem to the honourable members that these differences as to matters of procedure are of small importance in relation to the paramount need for securing a constitution for India which has the widest possible measure of consent. Peaceful transfer of power to an Indian Government freely set up by agreement among the Indians is a matter of supreme importance not only for India but also for Asia and the world as a whole.

"But it must be remembered that the representatives who came to London were not in a position to commit their parties and that the issues stir deep and passionate feelings. Time must be given for the parties, after full debate, to decide their attitude. It may also be that the subject will come under consideration by the Federal Court. In these circumstances, the Government feel that a general debate on Indian affairs at the present time would be inopportune and might destroy the prospect of settlement.

"I am sure I am speaking for all the parties in the House in making an appeal to all the communities in India to co-operate in the framing of a constitution, which, because it is based on consent will be welcomed by all and worked in a co-operative spirit."

OPPOSITION VIEW

Viscount Cranborne, leader of the Opposition said: "It is no good disguising from ourselves he extremely serious situation that has arisen and that the plan advanced for the constitutional future for India to consolidate the two main Indian communities has not succeeded."

He said that whether it was a hitch, or something in the nature of a breakdown, was a matter of opinion on which everybody might hold his views. He thought it would be wiser for them not to make any comment today. The situation was clearly delicate and Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement would require careful consideration

He added: "In these unhappy circumstances which have arisen, I do feel—and I think I speak for other Noble Lords on this side of the House—there are extremely strong arguments for a debate before the House rises. Up to now we have not pressed him unduly on Indian affairs. We have exercised the greatest restrain because we realize what the situation was. I think it is evident there is much elucidation of essential facts needed for the benefit of this House and the country also for one of our main functions is to inform the country, which is badly in need of information."

Viscount Samuel, on behalf of the Liberal Party, said that Lord Pethick-Lawrence's statement brought "our information up to the present date."

He added: "But I differ from Lord Cranborne as to the desirability of an early debate in this House on Indian affairs. We have considered the matter and have decided not to join in pressing the Government to allocate time for this purpose.

He added: "The principal point referred to in the statement today is itself of a somewhat legalistic character. It may indeed be referred to the Indian Federal Court for a decision and I do not imagine that any of your Lordships would be able to express a confident opinion upon it. As to the principal situation, by joint consent the great masters under consideration have been referred for decision to the Indian Constituent Assembly. Although it is true that various hitches have arisen with respect to the constitution and procedure of that Assembly, I do not think that speeches in the British Parliament are likely greatly to help in its deliberations.

"We agree with the Government's view and doubt whether any useful public service would be rendered by a debate in this House precisely at this present juncture."

The matter then terminated.

Statement in the House of Commons

Sir Stafford Cripps opened the two-day debate on India in the House of Commons on the **12th December** with a historical survey of Britain's century-and a-half association with India and her intimate association with the development of that country. After a resume of the communal disturbances that swept over various parts of India following the Calcutta August riots, Sir Stafford outlined the differences that prevented the Muslim League and the Congress from co-operating in the task of framing a constitution for India.

He said: "The object of the Cabinet Mission was to find means whereby they could balance the desire of the Congress for a strong unitary federation on the one hand with the Muslim League's desire for autonomy on the other. That balance was obtained by a limited Centre, the constitution of which was to be worked out by a Constituent Assembly, in which the Congress would have clear majority on the basis of population on which it was constituted on the one side, and Sections B and C in which the Muslims would have their majority on the other hand; and in which, of course, Provincial constitutions and, if so decided, Group constitutions could be worked out for the two groups of provinces. Thus each party had a majority where it is most deeply interested. It was, however, provided that no province could be forced into a Group against its will."

Sir Stafford added that the dispute which arose, as to how decision should be arrived at in the Sections, was already a matter of difference when the Mission was in India. Could a province vote itself out of a Grouping and itself determine its own constitution for the province or were both these matters to be decided by a simple majority of the Sections? The latter view was clearly the correct one in the opinion of the Cabinet Mission, HMG and their legal advisers; and this view was supported by the Muslim League.

CONGRESS VIEW

"The Congress took the contrary view. The Congress held that they were prepared to submit this question of interpretation to the Federal Court and accept its decision. But on this, to them a fundamental point, the Muslim League was not prepared to take that risk. There the matter stiil remained.

Sir Stafford said that the Government had asserted definitely their understanding of the document and had stated that if the Constituent Assembly desired to refer the matter to the Federal Court, then they hoped they would do it quickly so as to remove any doubts in their minds.

But the Government had also to envisage the possibility in the clause in the final paragraph of the Statement. This was perhaps a statement of the obvious—that if the Muslim League could not be persuaded to come into the Constituent Assembly, then parts of the country where they were in a majority could not be held to be bound by the results. That position had always been realized by the Congress, which had repeatedly said that they would not coerce unwilling areas to accept the new Constitution.

"I do not wish the House to gain the impression that the position is, therefore, hopeless.

"We understand that Mr. Jinnah is prepared to put the matter before his Council with a view to ascertaining whether on the basis of the statement of Dec. 6 they are now prepared to enter the Assembly, and we hope that the Constituent Assembly will show their statesmanship and desire for accommodation with the Muslim League by not committing themselves irrevocably to anything that will make it more difficult for the Muslim League to come in at a later date.

"For the moment, therefore, I cannot take that matter any further.

"It is perhaps a little unfortunate that at this tense and delicate moment we should have been induced to stage a debate in this House."

Mr. Churchill : Are we doing any harm now ?

Sir Stafford Cripps : "I hope not. We still have hope that, despite the mutual fears and suspicions which reign, the two parties may eventually find themselves side by side in the Constituent Assembly and in the Sections, for we are as convinced now as we have ever been, that it is by such co-operation that a satisfactory new constitution for India can be hammered out."

STATES AND MINORITIES

Sir Stafford then told the house how matters stood with the States and the minorities.

"Regarding Indian States, the Cabinet Mission laid down two principles as to the relationships of States to the Crown during this period of transition ; first, that during the transitional period of the Interim Government, paramountcy would remain with the British Crown. The British Government could not and would not in any circumstances, transfer that paramountcy to any other Government of British India

"Secondly, that when the transfer of power takes place in British India, then, if I may quote, as a logical consequence, and in view of desires expressed to them on behalf of Indian States, HMG will cease to exercise the powers of paramountcy."

Sir Stafford said that this quotation was in the statement made to the States while the Cabinet Mission was in India. "This means that the rights of the States, which flow from their relationship to the Crown, will no longer exist, and that the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount Power will return to the States again.

"Proposals were also put forward as to the participation of representatives of the States in the Constituent Assembly and also for a Negotiating Committee representing the States, which could settle outstanding matters with representatives of the major communities in British India.

"These arrangements were welcomed by the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes in a Press statement of June 19, and the Negotiating Committee has now been set up. In that statement, they expressed the view that the Mission's plan provided the necessary machinery for attaining by India of independence, as well as a fair basis for future negotiations.

"Not unnaturally, Indian States are most anxious that all major communities should be represented in the Constituent Assembly as they do not wish to be in the position of having to deal with one community only. Their ability, indeed, to co-operate must depend to some extent on what happens as regards the entry of the Muslim League into the Constituent Assembly."

TREATY WITH BRITAIN

Dealing with the minorities, Sir Stafford said that it would be remembered that, in the proposals of 1942, it was laid down that one of the conditions of acceptance by Britain of the new constitution was that there should be a treaty which, among other things, would contain a provision for the protection of minorities.

"In the proposals of the Cabinet Mission this year, the conditions of minorities were stated differently. That is, it was stated that a satisfactory provision for their protection should appear in the Constitution, and this we believe to be a more effective way and, indeed, it is in line with the demands put forward by Dr. Ambedkar to the Viceroy in 1942 when he stressed the ineffectiveness of treaty protection and the need for incorporation of protective provisions in the Constitution itself.

"The second point of interest is the provision suggested by the Mission for seeing that proper protection of minorities should be incorporated in the Constitution.

"At first sight, it might appear that this could be done by giving them weightage in the Constituent Assembly. But when the position is examined it will be found that, if sufficient weightage is given to make representation really effective for each of the minorities in the Constituent Assembly or in the Sections then it places the majority parties in an impossible position.

"It would, for instance, deprive the Muslims of their majority in Sections B and C. In fact, quite a lot of minority representatives have been elected to the Constituent Assembly owing to proportional representation and with some assistance from the major parties.

"There are six Indian Christians, three Anglo-Indians, 29 Scheduled Castes of Congress sponsoring and two of other sponsoring.

"The Sikhs, of course, have been dealt with as a major party in the Punjab, which is their stronghold, and they themselves have elected their own quota of representatives

"The Mission felt this was not in itself enough and so proposed among other things, an Advisory Committee on minorities to attain full representation of all minorities, especially those not otherwise represented in the Assembly, and it was the intention that this should be an authoritative body, whose recommendations would carry weight both with the Assembly and the Sections.

"Those are the general provisions with regard to minorities.

TWO SPECIAL CASES

"I would mention two of the special cases, Sikhs and the Depressed Classes. The position of the Sikhs is a very difficult one, because they do not have majority in any single province or area of the country and it is, therefore, impossible to devise any method of giving them any form of autonomy.

"They are, however, a very important community, almost entirely centred in the Punjab.

"They wished that the Section, which contained the Punjab, be given the right to veto any provision which affected their community, just as the Muslim League had such right in the Constituent Assembly itself. That was not possible, because a similar right would have had to be given to the other minorities and, if two such vetoes had existed, it would have been a certainty that the Section would not have arrived at any decision at all. By avoiding partition, which would have divided the Sikhs into two halves, they were saved a worse solution from their point of view. The Sikhs were not, perhaps, in so bad a position as they have thought. Both the other two communities must be anxious for their support. If that very valiant community will exercise patience, they will find they will come very well out of it."

Regarding the Scheduled Castes, Sir Stafford said: "As it turned out, they had got two representatives in the Interim Government, one from the Congress organisation and one independent from Bengal who was, in fact, a sympathiser with Dr. Ambedkar's Federation.

In the Constituent Assembly, there were 29 Congress representatives of the Scheduled Castes and two others. He hoped representation would be given to both the organisations the Advisory Committee on Minorities.

PLEA FOR CO-OPERATION

In conclusion, Sir Stafford said: "After careful re-examination of the scheme put forward in May last, we are convinced that it is not only fair but a feasible scheme. Whatever the scheme, it is clear, it can only succeed by co-operation and a certain degree of tolerance whether in the Constituent Assembly or in the Sections. Neither community can force the other to accept its decisions, unless there is sufficient mutual trust of the basic democratic intention of both the parties. We hope both the parties may arrive at an agreement between them in which they are both honourably bound, not only in letter, but in spirit.

"We can see no other way in which disaster and civil strife can be avoided. Nor has any party been able to suggest any alternative method, which is acceptable to the other party. We hope very much that nothing in this debate will accentuate the differences that exist or make more difficult the coming together of these great communities for the future benefit or glory of their country. I have attempted to lay before the House some of the important facts of the present Indian situation. I have tried to be objective in the summary which must, of necessary, omit many incidents. HMG are, of course, most deeply concerned wtth the recent developments in India, anxious as they are to see a rapid and smooth transition to self-government. They believe it is still possible for the plan of the Cabinet Mission to be carried through, but I am convinced, it is essential that all parties in India should call a halt to violent propaganda which has stirred up the people over the last few months. The first condition of a successful outcome in the Constituent Assembly and the section is that the parties should show by their conduct outside these bodies the reality of their desire to co-operate within them.

"If this degree of mutual trust can be engendered, there is no reason we can see why, within the next year, a new constitution cannot be worked out, which will then enable the British people to hand over to the Indian people, with dignity and completeness, the power they have so long exercised in India and, by so doing, complete a great chapter of world development and realize the hopes of so many of those British citizens, who have served British India so long in the past" (loud cheer).

Churchill's Statement

Mr. *Churchill* began by saying that the Opposition associated itself with Sir Stafford in his appeal to the various leaders of parties in India to abstain from violent propaganda and invective against each other, which might have the effect of bringing about a recrudescence or intensification of the grave disorders which had occurred. "Sir Stafford Cripps deplored in moderate terms the fact that we are having a debate on this subject to-day, but it would be a pity if the British Empire in India passed out of life into history without the House of Commons seeming to take any interest in the affair, without any record even in Hansard of the transaction. "Declaring that the Opposition would not divide the house, Mr. Churchill said : "We must indulge the hope that an arrangement will be reached between the two great Indian religions and their political parties which gave modern expression to their age-long antagonisms."

Apparently referring to his insistence on having a debate, Mr. Churchill said : "If we remain silent after all these months, it might be thought that we were in agreement with HMG and that the policy they were pursuing was the national policy and not the party policy of the forces they represent. It might be thought that this was the policy which was endorsed, and the execution of which was endorsed, by the British people as a whole, whereas, for good or for ill, the responsibility rests with HMG. On their heads lies the responsibility, not only for the execution but for the impulse they have given to a great many tendencies, which are dominant in this matter to-day.

"I will say nothing to derogate from any utterance or statement made by members of the other parties, but I would be very sorry, indeed, that as matters unfold in India, there should be any question of our being held accountable at the present time for the course of events.

"Therefore, we are bound to take the opportunity of bringing the affair to the light of day.

MEASURE OF CONSENT

"There was and still is, a general measure of consent here and throughout the land to the final transference of power from the House of Commons into Indian hands, but that transference, if it is to take place, must be based upon agreement and co-operation of the principal masses and forces among the Indian people. Only in this way could that transference take place without measureless bloodshed out there and lasting discredit to our name in the world. Those who are acquainted with the general movement of our relations with India over the last 20 years have hoped that the desire of many Indians to be rid for ever of British rule and guidance would have brought a melting of hearts among the vast populations inhabiting the Indian continent, and that they should have joined together to maintain the peace and unity of India and stride more boldly into their independent future,

'It is necessary to place on record the undoubted fact that no such melting of hearts has occurred. In fact, I think that that would be considered an under-statement. On the contrary, all facts and omens point to the revival, in acute and violent forms of the internal hatreds and quarrels, which have long lain dormant under the mild incompetence of liberal British control. To me, it would come as no surprise if there was complete failure to agree. As I warned the House in 1931, if we were to wash our hands of responsibility, a fierce civil war would immediately break out but this warning, like others, fell on deaf ears." Mr. Churchill said that he always bore in mind the words used by his father when secretary for India 60 years ago, in 1885 "Our rule in India is, as it were, a sheet of oil spread out over the surface and keeping calm and quiet and unruffled by storms an immense and profound ocean of humanity."

That was a task, commented Mr. Churchill, which, with all their shortcomings and through all their ordeals, they had faithfully and loyally pursued since Queen Victoria assumed the Imperial Crown.

That is the task which we have now declared ourselves willing to abandon, abandon completely, provided we have such assurances of agreement between Indian races, religious parties and forces as will clear us of the responsibility of leaving

India to a hideous collapse and catastrophe. We have no such assurances at the present time."

AGREEMENT INDISPENSABLE

An agreement in India was an indispensable condition. It was the foundation of the Cripps plan and the Cabinet Mission plan. "There is no agreement yet before us, I say yet. There is only strife and bloodshed, and the prospect is worse. That is the first point we must take note of—absence of an agreement, which was the common ground between us and would stand as the foundation of future transference of power."

"The second point was the cardinal error of the British Government when on Aug 12 they invited one single Indian party, the Congress, to nominate all the Members of the Viceroy's Council (Conservative cheers), thereby precipitating strife and massacres over a wide region (Conservative cheers and Labour shouts of protest) unparalleled in India since the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Indeed, it is certain that more people have lost their lives or been wounded in India by violence since the Nehru Government was installed in office four months ago that in the previous 90 years, four generations of men, covering a large part of five reigns. That is only a foretaste of what may well come in the future. It may be only the first few heavy drops of rain before the thunderstorm breaks, This frightful slaughter in wide regions had in the main fallen upon the Muslim minorities." Quoting reports from "high and creditable witnesses" of what had taken place in Bihar, Mr. Churchill said that it cast into shade the Armenian atrocities with which Gladstone once stirred the moral sense of Liberal Britain.

"We are, of course, cauterised by all we have passed through ourselves, our faculty for wonder is ruptured, our faculty of reason is numb. The world is full of misery and pathos, but it has not stirred us as it would have done our fathers or predecessors in this House."

He doubted very much whether the official figure of 10,000 lives lost since the Central Government of Pandit Nehru took over represented half the total of racial and religious murders to date. "This outbreak of animal fury has ravaged many large districts, and may, at any time, resume or spread its devastation through the teeming cities and provinces as big as England or the British Isles." It was, Mr. Churchill said, some comfort to recall that both Muslim and Hindu leaders had joined together to arrest or at least to mitigate 'this appalling degeneration.'

"I have been informed that it was Pandit Nehru himself who gave the order, which the Provincial Government of Bihar had been afraid to give, for the police and troops to fire upon a mob who were exterminating the minority in their midst. That is certainly to his credit. May it be taken as an encouraging sign. Nevertheless, I must record my belief, which I have long held, that any attempt to establish the reign of a numerical majority in India will never be achieved without a civil war. Perhaps it will not be in fronts of armies r organized forces, but in thousands of different places. Such war would lead through uncountable agony to an awful abridgment in the population.

"Any attempt by the Congress party to establish Hindu rule on the basis of majority, measured by standards of Western civilization or what is left of it, by proceeding with the forms and formulae of Government with which we are familiar, will at a very early stage be fatal to any conception of the unity of India."

Mr. Churchill added that disputes and deadlocks were not the issues at stake. They were only symbols of the passion and harted of thousands of years. The unity of India was a superficial appearance imposed there by long generations of British rule, and it would pass away for long periods of time once the imperial element of guidance from outside was withdrawn.

Another new and important fact, Mr. Churchill said, was the declaration by the British Government that a constitution should be framed by the Constituent Assembly, in which each section of the Hindu population had been represented and that the Government could not contemplate forcing such a constitution on unwilling parts of the country.

"If this at least is the settled policy of the Government, it will carry them far. It comprises within its scope the discharge of our obligations both to the Muslim inhabitants of India and to those who are called Scheduled or Depressed Classes. "How this policy will be carried into effect it is not possible to foresee, still less to foretell, at this moment. It is, indeed, a formidable programme. That declaration appears to be the most important milestone in this long journey.

"The British Government owed special protection to the Muslims numbering 90,000,000, who comprised the majority of the fighting elements of India, and the untouchables of anything from 40,000,000 to 60,000,000. They had been outwitted and outmanœuvred on this question. The pretence was put forward that they were a small part of the vast Hindu community not entitled to be considered as a minority community in Indian life.

"I must ask the Prime Minister to state the Government's view and intentions on this particular point. Are untouchables to be considered as an entity by themselves, entitled to consideration given to entities, or are they merely to be used to swell the numerical size of those whom they regard as their oppressors ?"

Turning to the character of the Constituent Assembly which, he said, was apparently to proceed to make a republic for India and engage upon it at once, Mr. Churchill said : "They are dealing with the fortunes of all Indians. A large part is not even to be represented."

Mr. *Cove*(Lab) : Is Mr. Churchill in favour of extending the franchise ?

Mr. *Churchill* : Yes, certainly. (Mr. Cove laughed). I have always been in favour of extending the franchise. I believe in the will of the people. But I do not believe in perversion of the will of the people—actively organised and engineered by minorities, who, having seized power by force or fraud or chicanery, go forward and use that power in the name of the vast masses with whom they have long lost effective connexion.

"A decision is to be taken as a result of which the British connexion with India will come to an end. I am not at all admitting that decision represents the wish of the people of India. Nor do I admit that the authorities who are going to utter this expression can claim democratic title which, in modern days, attaches to those who speak for large majorities of universal suffrage electorates. But the Cabinet Mission's proposal of May, for the setting up of the Constituent Assembly was essentially a proposal that the main political parties of India should meet, and through their representatives endeavour to work out the proposed Constitution."

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Mr. Churchill asked whether the British Government considered that the meetings now taking place in New Delhi, which the Muslim league was not so far attending at all, were in any sense meetings of a valid Constituent Assembly. The fact that Muslims were refusing to attend remained a fact, whoever was to blame for it, and a meeting of one side without the other was not a conference. "Indeed, the text of the proposals of the Government and of Sir Stafford Cripps whose ability had been devoted with such disastrous effects to furthering of the whole of this policy.........

Mr. Churchill was interrupted with loud Government cries of "shame," and one voice called out "dirty."

In an atmosphere of rapidly increasing excitement Mr. Churchill said : "I remember when Sir Stafford Cripps went out as representative of the Government of which I was the head and how we had to pull him up because. . . ."

Mr. Churchill halted amidst interruption and then said : "I do not want to say anything"—he was interrupted again by loud Government cries of "shocking."

Sir Stafford Crips, red in the face, rose from his seat on the Government front bench in the midst of the noise and said : "If Mr. Churchill intends to disclose what passed between me and the Cabinet on that occaison, I hope he will disclose it all' (loud Government cheers).

Mr. *Churchill* : "Sir Stafford Cripps is quite right in what he says, and I shall not pursue the point (laughter). What is all this laughter? No one impugns the conscientious integrity and virtue of Sir Stafford Cripps but I must say that in the Cabinet Mission, of which we have results published which have taken place under the present Government, his influence has, I have every reason to believe, been used for altogether undue emphasis being placed on advantages being given to Hindus (cries of "No").

"At any rate, Sir Stafford Cripps can defend himself and no one more than he has taken responsibility in this matter, because neither of his colleagues could compare in that actueness and energy of mind with which he devotes himself to so many topics injurious to the strength and welfare of the State (further interruption). To return to the validity of the present Constituent Assembly on which I trust we shall have a statement, the document of May arranged that if the President of the Assembly should decide that a matter raised is not a major communal issue, the party which objects and maintains it is a major communal issue may claim that the matter is referred for the opinion of the Federal Court.

"How is it possible that this procedure should work if the party that objects is not there? Therefore the meeting at Delhi is not the proposed Constituent Assembly which they put forward.

"Take a more homely analogy; if a bride or a bridegroom fails to turn up in the church, the result is not what is called a unilateral wedding (laughter). The absolute essence is that both the parties should be there."

In a sentence that was only partly heard in the Press gallery, Mr. Churchill said: "We hope that this may still be the case."

"It is still pertinent to inqure if HMG consider that their proposed conference of the Constituent Assembly has begun.

"I feel bound to end on a positive conclusion although I will express it rather in terms of negation (Government laughter).

"In all this confusion, uncertainty and gathering storm, which those who have studied the Indian problem for long years might well have foreseen, there appear—at the present time—three proverbial choice before the British Parliament.

"The first is to proceed with ruthless logic to quit India regardless of what may happen there. This we can certainly do. Nothing can prevent us if it be the will of Parliament from gathering together our women and children and unarmed civilians and marching under strong rearguards to the sea. That is one choice.

"The second is to assert the principle so often proclaimed that the King needs no unwilling subjects, and that the British Commonwealth of Nations contemplates no compulsory partnership; and that, in default of real agreement, partition of India between the two different races and religions, widely differing entities must be faced. Those who wish to make their own lives in their own way may do so and the gods be with them; and those who desire to find in variety of systems means of association with our great free Commonwealth may also be permitted to take the ourse which ultimately they may show themselves ready to take.

ANARCHY MUST BE STOPPED

"It follows, of course, from this sourse, this second alternative, that anarchy and massacre must be prevented and that, failing a measure of agreement not now in sight, an impartial administration responsible to Parliament shall be set up to maintain the fundamental guarantees of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of millions, nay the hundreds of millions of humble folk who now stand in jeopardy, bewilderment and fear. Whether that can be achieved or not by any apparatus of British-controlled Government that we can form from our dissipated resources is again a matter upon which it is now impossible to form a final judgment.

One thing, however, there is: that whatever happens we must not do: we must not allow British troops or British officers in the Indian Army to become agencies and instruments of enforcing Caste Hindu domination upon 90,000,000 Muslims and 60,000.000 untouchables, nor must the prestige or authority of the British Power in India, even in its sunset, be used in partnership on either side of these profound and awful cleavages.

"For such a course to be used to enforce religious and party victory upon minorities of scores of millions would seem to combine the disadvantages of all policies and lead us ever deeper in tragedy without giving us relief from our burdens or liberation, however sadly purchased from moral and factural responsibility.

"It is because we feel that these issues should be placed bluntly and plainly before British and Indian peoples, even amid their present distresses and perplexities, that we thought it our bounden duty to ask for this debate" (loud Opposition cheers).

Mr *Clement Davies* (for the Liberal Party) said that Sir Stafford Cripps had given a masterly summary of the letters and documents, and that the summary had contained no bias regarding the situation of any one of the parties. He asked what good purpose was being served by Mr Churchill's speech and his quips.

"I am entitled to say this to the Leader of the Oopposition: I cannot imagine anything which will do greater disservice to a settlement than the suggestion that any one of the three members of the Mission was moved by bias towards one section or another." (cheers).

He said that there had been no words more horrible in Europe in the past than those caused by religious differences. That should be a warning, he said, to the Indian people to do their utmost to act in a statesmanlike manner, remembering the responsibility not for the particular party they represented but for India as a whole. He said that, in expressing gratitude to the British Government for what they were endeavouring to do, and especially to the three who had composed the Mission, the house would hope that even now it would be possible for those concerned to come together not only for the benefit of the people of India, but for the benefit of the people of Asia and, indeed, for the peace of the world.

Col Hamilton (Lab), who said he was speaking as one who had been born and spent a greater part of his life in India, and four generations of whose family had served there, declared that Mr Churchill misunderstood the entire position in India. It was evident that he saw India in a state similar to what it was when he (Mr Churchill) was a young subaltern there. Those days were gone. It was perfectly true even now, as Mr Churchill had said, that the number of Indians who were politically conscious, was a small percentage of the whole population but they could and did influence the Indians and got across to them the simple idea that it was a humiliating position to be dominated by as people of entirely different colour and race. They had been given the feeling that the one thing they wanted was independence under a Government of their own.

Sir Stanley Reed (C) thought that the Government had approached this great problem with courage, wisdom and imagination and he gave his support to the broad outline of the policy they pursued.

The present development had had its seed sown over a century ago when higher education was based on the English language, and no one could know the English language and history without being steeped in a spirit of freedom.

"I think the Cabinet Mission's scheme and the further steps taken by the Government should command general support of all the parties in this House (Labour cheers).

He said that if he thought that Pakistan was the solution of the Indian problem, he would support it and commend it to the House, but one had only to look at the map to see a gap of 700 miles between the Eastern and Western zones. That could not conceivably be a practical administrative proposition apart from its economic aspects. Sir Stanley believed that, if the Cabinet Mission's scheme for grouping of provinces were carried out, they might see a genuine solution of this thorny question.

Commenting on Mr. Churchill's speech, Sir Stanley said: "I wish Mr. Churchill had given some constructive alternative to the Government's programme. I did not detect one in his speech. I cannot join entirely with him in saying that a great blunder was made when the Interim Government was constituted entirely from the Congress. Because the Muslim community decided to abstain from taking those seats which were earmarked for them, the Government had to be carried on. A temporary Government is not one with which anybody can be satisfied for longer than can be avoided. I shall not join that criticism of the Viceroy and the Government. We must remember at this juncture the importance of keeping behind any Government, a substantial body of opinion reflected both in the Central and Provincial legislatures." He appealed to the Muslim community among whom, he said, he had many friends, to enter the Constituent Assembly immediately.

Mr. *Thomas Reid* (Lab) regarded Mr Churchill's speech as tantamount to an incitement to the minorities to continue to block the way to self-goverument. He declared that the views of the British people were almost to a man behind the Government's policy. The views expressed by Mr. Churchill did not represent those of the British people and he did not think they represented the views of his own party.

Earl Winterton (C) said: "The fact is that there is a final and irrevocable rupture between the Congress and the Muslim League." Britain's problem was how to prevent the terrible consequences that would grow from that rupture if events were left to take their course.

Mr. *Silvermen* (Lab) asked whether it was right that a recalcitrant minority, simply by the exercise of intransigence should be able to stay the march of the whole people to independence. He thought that if the Cabinet Mission had erred, it was more towards the side of the Muslims rather than the Congress. He hoped that nothing had been said in the House which would encourage certain sections in India in the belief that the British Army would be used as arbiter between the various parties in India.

Mr. *Hugh Molson* (C)—one of the Tory Reform Group—said that the future constitution of India should be such that neither community could be submerged by the other. So far, the Government's course had been far-sighted and wise, but if the worst happened, and it was impossible to obtain an agreement, he hoped that Government would show courage and firmness, and would not allow the end of

British rule in India to be followed by an enforcement by British troops of the rule of one community over another.

Mr. *Gallacher* (Com) said that if, as many members declared, they wanted India to have independence, this could simply be achieved by the British withdrawing from India. Indians would sort things out for themselves.

Brig. Rayner (C) thought that the Government should make three conditions: (1) Refuse to force on India a constitution unacceptable to a large minority; (2) Refuse to hand over the final responsibility for law and order until it was quite certain that the new Indian Government could preserve it and; (3) continue to protect India from aggression from outside.

Major Woodrow Wyatt (Lab), who accompanied Sir Stafford Cripps to India as Personal Assistant, described Mr. Churchill's speech as mischievous, particularly that part which suggested that Sir Stafford Cripps had been partial during his negotiations in India. That, he said, was a deliberate attempt to suggest to the Muslim League that it was no good relying on the Cabinet Mission's plan because the odds were against it from the start.

Major Wyatt said that Britain must make up her mind that if Indians showed no signs of coming to an agreement, she could not support the existing state of of affairs any longer. "We must say clearly and unequivocally to India that, on a certain fixed date, we are going to leave India with our troops, with our officials, and with any British residents who wish to go with us. We must announce that date before the administrative machinery has completely crumpled in our hands. That date, I would suggest, should certainly not be more than 12 months ahead. We cannot allow British troops to be dragged into either side in a civil war."

Maj. Beamish (C) wondered whether it would be useful to refer the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress to the Federal Court because he found it difficult to believe that the former would accept the decision if it differed from their present opinion. He hoped a compromise could be found to enable the negotiations to go forward satisfactorily.

He declared that sections of the Socialist Party had their heads in the clouds in regard to India. Let India prove to the world that the trust this Government had put in her had not been misplaced. Let India remember that our goal was her goal."

Mr. *Davies* (Lab) said: "It would be wrong for any of us to make cheap party quips, and that is why I deprecate the speech of the leader of the Opposition."

Mr. *Nicholson* (C), another Member of the British Parliamentary delegation to India, said that he supported the policy of the British Government which seemed to him to be a logical development of previous policies of previous Governments. He added that Britain ought to face the fact that the Assembly might fail. He himself thought it would fail. "I believe that we in this country have an inescapable responsibility for the safety of the lives of the people of India," he declared, adding that British troops should never be employed at the behest of one party to suppress another. Britain's primary responsibility was for the protection of the lives of the Indian masses and whatever happened she could not avoid that responsibility.

He said that Britain must hand over India in running order and demanded that immediate steps should be taken to strengthen the administration. Britain must consider whether they fully recognized their responsibility for the safety of the lives of the Indian masses. The debate was at this stage adjourned.

On the 13th December, Mr. *Alexander*, Minister-Designate of Defence, concluding the debate warmly repudiated Mr. Churchill's charge that the Labour Government had committed a cardinal error by inviting the Congress Party to nominate Members of the Interim Government. He added that he was deeply shocked to hear Mr. Churchill say that that action had precipitated a series of massacres over wide regions.

The motion that the House takes note of the statement on India by the Prime Minister on Dec. 11 [and express the hope that a settlement of the present difficulties would be forthcoming was agreed to without a division.

It was difficult, Mr. Alexander declared, to place any other construction on that "irresponsible statement" than that it was Mr. Churchill's intention to place the blame for these fratricidal disorders on the Government and the Viceroy.

Mr. *Churchill*, who entered the Chamber some time after the Minister began speaking, challenged Mr. Alexander several times to say whether the Labour Government would consider valid the decisions taken by an Indian Constituent Assembly representative of only one political party. Through Mr. Churchill pressed his point

Mr. Alexander emphatically reiterated his refusal to answer what he described as a "hypothetical question."

Mr. Alexander also referred to Earl Winterton's statement yesterday that the rupture between the Congress and the Muslim League was final and irrevocable, declaring: "I think it is nothing but disastrous that a statement of this kind should be made at this crucial hour." He expressed the view that if the great Indian communities would take a lesson from the manner in which the Indian Army had conducted itself during the recent communal outbreaks they would quickly make progress in the solution of their problems.

Sir John Anderson, re-opening the debate, said that he thought it important that the people of India should feel that Parliament was alert and alive to every development in the changing situation.

"I would also wish the Services to feel that we here are mindful of the heavy burdens that they are being called upon to bear (cheers)—burdens which are being aggravated not lightly by the developments that are going on."

He was troubled about the condition of the administrative machine in India and wanted an assurance that every possible care was being taken to maintain it in condition to discharge effectively the responsibilities which still had to be borne as in the past. Responsibility for the course of events leading up to the present situation was widely distributed, but he did not feel the British had anything with which to reproach themselves.

"Mistakes there may have been, here and there," Sir John added, "but on the whole what has been accomplished by Britain in India will stand out in history as one of the most splendid achievements of the human race. Whatever our regrets I think we can console ourselves with the thought that, stony though the path may have been—our progress may have been attended by hardship and misfortune in various directions—the progresses and advances that have been made towards full self-Government in India were in fact inevitable."

"Events showed that one community democratically organized and ruled could not in fact indefinitely hold in subjection another community ripe for self-Government. An attempt to do so would, I suggest, involve a challenge to the basis of the community's own authority. That is the broad truth to which I would subscribe. Britain had to see that the change in its final stage was effected in the best way calculated to protect those interests for which she had become the special charge and, above all, that the change was effected in an orderly manner."

He considered the Cabinet Mission's plans as "most ingenious" and he would give it full support. He hoped that even now, despite many discouraging signs, it might be found to provide a basis for agreement when necessary details had been further elaborated.

"We must recognize that the plan as presented by the Mission went beyond previous declarations that the future constitution for India must be the work of the Indians alone, but I do not think anyone would wish to reproach the Members of the Mission. They had, as things turned out, no alternative."

He was, however, critical of the proceedings leading up to the formation of the Interim Government. So far, he said, he had struck no discordant note, but here he must join issue and be sharply critical.

"I was always apprehensive lest the process of Indianization so far as the Central Government of India was concerned might be carried further than was consistent with the efficiency of the governmental machinery within the existing constitutional structure. But I had certainly no idea that a fundamental change in that structure would be made. That, I suggest, is exactly what has happened."

Mr. Amery's proposals of June, 1945 proposed that the selection of a new Indian Government should be made by the Viceroy on his responsibility from a list of names which would be submitted to him, Sir John said. The constitutional position and status of the Members' Council, powers of the Viceroy and the responsibility of the Secretary of State were to be entirely unchanged. Under the Cabinet Mission's proposals there had been, so far as he could understand, no process of selection. Certain Indian leaders had been included in the Viceroy's Council almost ex-officio as Indian leaders. They had gone through certain forms and he supposed the oath of allegiance had been taken, but they were now acting as Ministers responsible not to the Viceroy but the legislature and as party leaders.

"Could it possibly be suggested," Sir John asked, "that the powers reserved to the Viceroy, which represented important safeguards insisted upon by Parliament and expressing the ultimate responsibility of Parliament could be exercised in the same way in regard to such people as they could be in regard to people who were nothing more than Crown servants? Could it be denied that this development had prejudiced and not advanced the prospects of a constitutional settlement and that the administrative efficiency of the Indian Government had gravely impaired? (Conservative cheers).

Sir John added: "It is my duty to say frankly that a cardinal blunder was made when that change was decided upon and put into effect. Mr. Churchill said that a cardinal blunder was made when Pandit Nehru was permitted alone to suggest who should be the Members of the Council. I go further. To allow a representative of Indians nominated by political organizations to constitute a responsible instrument on which H. M. G. and Parliament must rely for the discharge of the responsibilities which still rest quite clearly on Britain and on the British Parliament was a mistake and a blunder of the first order.

"We have to maintain an orderly Government in India. What we have in fact done by this change has been to sweep aside, to abrogate the administrative safeguards which have hitherto been regarded as absolutely vital for the discharge of our responsibility in relation to the minorities and those other interests in India which we are obliged to protect.

"That is not a criticism of any Indian statesman but of the Ministers, and I hope they will meet it. If I have not made the ground of my criticism clear, I hope I shall be asked to further elucidate it."

Mr. *Alexander*, a member of the Cabinet Mission to India, intervened: "I think the whole point is that no such fundamental change, as Sir John seems to indicate, was made. The powers of the Viceroy were entirely as they were, backed up by what was available to back them up. But we did, and I think we were right—in view of what was said in the process of the preparation of the Cripps Offer, it was desirable to get further support of the political leaders in India at that time—to widen the popular support of Indian opinion in the direction in which we wanted to go."

Mr. Alexander continued: "We have, and the Viceroy has, all the way through sought to interfere as little as possible with the policy of the Interim Government, either the first one or the second one to which the Muslims have now acceded. To say that the actual constitutional position has changed would not be correct."

Sir John Anderson: "Mr. Alexander has not addressed himself to my argument at all. There is all the difference in the world between the proposal that was put forward ultimately in the June last year, under which the Viceroy was to make a selection from the names submitted to him, and what has now happened. The provisions of the 1935 Act have not been repealed. They could not be. They stand. You cannot possibly suppose that the Viceroy can exercise his powers in relation to the Indian leaders who are practically self-nominated, appointed ex-officio as Indian leaders who were acting—from their point of view quite rightly—as party leaders and who regarded themselves as responsible directly to the Indian legislature. You cannot expect these powers to be exercised in quite the same way as they would be by persons whose status was clearly understood by them to be that of Crown servants." He continued: "I suggest that here a case has been made. A subtle change but nevertheless a profound change which must have a very important bearing in the practical issues with which we are concerned on the necessity of the Indian Government to discharge their ultimate responsibility for peace, order and good Government. I think it is agreed that amid all these disturbing changes, we remain clearly responsible for the maintenance of an orderly Government are fully alive to the necessity of seeing that the Services are maintained in a state of efficiency, that they recognize that it is upon them that responsibility rests—responsibility to Parliament and nowhere else. I mean by Services the civil military and the police—all those Services on whom we have to rely for the discharge of the ultimate service of the Government, namely, peace and good order."

Referring to Mr. Churchill's remark yesterday that Pandit Nehru had been reported as having given orders for the troops or police to shoot, Sir John asked why the question of giving orders in these circumstances had arisen. The responsibility for maintaining order was that of a Provincial Government. He would have regarded it as a very grave reflection indeed on the way he was discharging his responsibility if, when he was the Governor of Bengal, someone had come down from Delhi and given orders to the troops or even to the police.

"I make no criticism whatever of Pandit Nehru in that connextion. I am merely saying that it seems to be disquieting that such incidents should occur and that apparently no one should draw from it the inference I draw—that in certain parts of India the authority of constituted responsible people is breaking down."

"Britain had to see to it that until she handed over her responsibilities they were fully and conscientiously discharged. Any idea that the British could go out of India and leave a vacuum and abandon the Indian people to disorder and chaos was utterly abhorrent to him.

"I think it may prove that we shall have to hand over authority not to the Central Government representing the whole of India but to some other authority, however constituted I do not know."

Referring to the demand of Pakistan, Sir John added: "The last sentence of the Prime Minister's announcement last week was relevant in that connexion. "I personally, from such knowledge as I have of the Indian situation and affairs, would not regard partition in any form as intrinsically attractive. I agree in that respect with the comments of the Cabinet Mission. I can perfectly understand that partition in some form might commend itself to sections of Indian opinion as preferable to something else which they might regard as still worse. But there were very great practical difficulties. The economic situation under any partition scheme in India must present many difficult features and there were also special considerations affecting particular areas.

'The north-west frontier seems to be comparatively simple because you have the N. W. F. P, you have Sind and British Baluchistan. But the Punjab presents features which are deserving of special consideration under any plan, and I should very greatly hope that some way would be found, however the situation may ultimately shape itself, of keeping together the communities in the Punjab—Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. I am glad to learn from something said the other day that resposible leaders of the Muslims have expressed themselves as sympathizing to that conception of partition presents in my view the most formidable difficulty.

"Not only in Assam, an area in which there is not a Muslim majority although it is closely linked ethnologically and economically with Eastern Bengal, but Bengal in the west contains a community which is predominantly Hindu and the great city of Calcutta, which is almost the only effective outlet for the products of Bengal, is, I think, 75% Hindu. I think that arguments that could be advanced on one of the other in regard to Calcutta in relation to the partition of India present very formidable difficulties indeed."

It seemed to him most important that the fundamental unity of India as a constitutional entity should be preserved. He hoped that nothing he had said would impair the chances of such a solution, but he did not think the prospects were at the moment bright. Sir Join concluded: "Let us, however, all be agreed that we have to discharge our fundamental responsibilities for a Government in India until a constitutional change has been effected and let us all be agreed that it must be the dominant consideration with us that we should hand over those responsibilities intact and in an orderly fashion."

Jinnah on the Interpretation of Grouping Clause

Mr. *Jinnah* indicated at a London Press Conference on the 14th December that if the Congress unequivocally accepted the British Government's interpretation of the grouping clauses in the Cabinet Mission's constitutional proposals for India, he would certainly have to call his Council. He added that he could not, of course, say whether his Council would decide to enter the Constituent Assembly at Delhi.

Mr. Jinnah, whose main pronouncements were contained in answers to questions, re-affirmed Pakistan as the goal of the Muslim League, agreed with Mr. Churchill's predictions that things would get worse in India "if Britain did not act boldly and frankly," and answered the question whether he were once a Congressman by retorting: "Once I belonged to a preparatory school."

Questioned about his impression of the two-day India debate in the House of Commons this week, Mr. Jinnah replied: "My impression of the debate generally is that light is dawning on the tremendous mess that already has been made and, I think, Parliament is in a better position now with regard to some of the facts than they were during all previous months."

Asked if the League's goal was complete independence, he replied: "What do you think we are fighting for? The goal of complete independence is Pakistan —certainly."

Asked to give his reaction to the paragaph in the British Government's statement of Dec. 6 to the effect that it did not contemplate forcing upon the minorities any constitution in the framing of which they were unrepresented, Mr. Jinnah replied: "Suppose the Federal Court decides against the interpretation of H. M. G. what will H. M. G. do with regard to the Constituent Assembly? Is it to proceed on the basis of interpretation given by the Federal Court contrary to the interpretation of H. M. G. ? In that case the Muslim League could never accept it."

A question suggested that there was a feeling in London that the Muslim League was not prepared to submit the principal question separating the parties to the Federal Court. Mr. Jinnah replied: "If you ask me why we always have been averse to being a party to the reference to the Federal Court on this point, it is because the authors themselves (the British Cabinet Mission and the Government) ought to know what the proposals are. I say it is not a matter for a court. A mediator making a proposal should know what he means and should say if there is any doubt in anyone's mind: 'I will make it clear.'

Mr. Jinnah added that, besides, this was a fundamental basic point—it was the very foundation of the scheme. "It is not a justiciable issue," he said. "I tell you I will trust no court to decide on a point like this."

One Pressman put a dual question. If the Congress accepted the proposals laid down by the British Government. he asked, would the Muslim League be willing to take part in the Constituent Assembly and in that case would be willing to agree with the Congress that the Assembly was a sovereign and autonomous body not subject to outside interference.

Mr. Jinnah answered the first part by saying that if the Congress unequivocally accepted HMG's interpretation of Dec. 6, certainly he would have to call his Council. He indicated that he could not anticipate a decision of the Muslim League Council. He thanked the questioner of the second point. "It is all very well to talk in this loose way on the position of the Constituent Assembly." he said, going on to tell his audience that the Congress with 292 supporters—there might be a few less—in the Assembly, certainly had a "bruit majority" whereas the Muslim number was 79.

He added: "That is what people understand when they talk of democracy. As between the Hindus and Muslims there is no such thing as democracy. It is a majority of one nation that can overrule the unanimous decision of any other nation because they are 97 and the Congress are 292. In the perilous position that the Muslim will be," observed Mr. Jinnah, "we don't want any outside interference in this sense that somebody should tinker with us, but there must be some provision within the scheme itself which will prevent a brute majority taking the bit in its mouth and running away. But to treat it as a sovereign Constituent Assembly taking decision after decision and then presenting the poor Muslim minority, the British Government and the world with a fait accompli—there is the real danger."

"Does that mean that the Muslim minority wants to continue a veto on progress ?" asked the questioner.

"That is often said, but it is absurd" answered Mr. Jinnah. Unless the majority of the nation can take what decisions it likes, the moment yo do not agree you are exercising your veto and you are intransigent. In that case the majority is to grind down the minority completely and the minority has no remedy." Mr. Jinnah asked his audience if it was ever known anywhere in the world of a constitution that worked successfully without being framed with the willing assent of major elements that lived in the land. "Even the machinery will not work unless it has the good-will, co-operation and honest desire of the people."

With regard to the statement that the Muslims were placing a veto on the advance of the majority, he asked: "What majority do you mean ? If you mean the Hindus, we wish them godspeed. Go ahead—establish your Hindustan, frame your constitution for the Hindus. Leave us alone and we shall frame a constitution for Pakistan."

Asked if he were advocating a separate Constituent Assembly for Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah said that he had always done so.

Mr. Jinnah opened his Press conference by a long statement which covered much of the ground contained in his speech at the Kingsway Hall meeting last night and observed that the Muslim League time and again had been let down in the course of negotiations with the Cabinet Mission and the British Government.

Referring to the Congress and the Muslim League participation in the present provisional Government, he said that the Congress had made its intentions clear—that whatever the constitution they were going to act as a Cabinet with joint and collective responsibility and a responsibility only to the Legislature, where they have an overwhelming majority, and to no outside authority.

"When we say we cannot allow that," declared Mr. Jinnah, we are criticized as the King's Party and agents of British imperialism."

Members of the Indian Constituent Assembly

MADRAS

General—45 Members :

45 Members nominated by Congress:

1.	Mr. C. Rajagopalachari	(Member of the Congress Working Committee. Former Premier of Madras.)
2.	Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya	(Former member of the Congress Working Committee).
3.	Mr. T. Prakasam	(Premier of Madras).
4.	Sir N. Gopalaswami	(Member of the Council of State. Former Prime Minister of Kashmir).
5.	Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar	(Former Advocate-General of Madras).
6.	Mr. M. Anantasayanam Iyengar	(M. L. A. Central).
7.	The Raja of Bobbili	(Chief Minister of Madras, 1932-37. A leader of Justice party).
8.	Kumararaja Sir M. A. Muthia Chettiar	(M. L. A., Provincial).
9.	Mrs. Ammu Swaminathan	(M. L. A., Central).
10.	Mr. Ramnath Goenka	(Managing Director of the "Indian Express," Madras).
11.	Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari	(Former M. L. A., Central).
12.	Dr. P. Subbarayan	(Former Minister of Madras).
13.	The Rev. Fr. Jerome D'Souza	(Principal of the Loyola College, Madras).
14.	Mrs. Dakshayani Velayudhan	(Member of the Cochin Legislative Council).
15.	Mr. B. Gopala Reddi	(M. L A., Provincial. Former Minister of Madras).
16.	Mr. D. Govind Das	
17.	Mr. K. Kamaraj Nadar	(M. L. A., Provincial. President of the Tamilnad Provincial Congress Committee).
18.	Mr. K. Madhava Menon	(Member of the Madras Legislative Council. President of the Kerala Congress Committee).
19.	Mr. P. Kunhiraman	
20.	Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Minister of Madras).
21.	Mr. V. Nadimuthu Pillai	(Former M. L. A., Provincial).
22.	Mr. S. Nagappa	(M. L. A., Provincial).
23.	Mr. P. L. Narasimha Raju	(M. L. A., Provincial).
24.	Mr. C. Perumalswami Reddiar	
25.	Mr. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar	(M. L. A., Central).
26.	Mr. O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar	(Member of the Madras Legislative Council).
27.	Prof. N. G. Ranga	(M. L. A., Central. President of the Andhra P. C. C.)
28.	Mr. N. Sanjeev Reddi	(M. L. A., Provincial).
29.	Mr. S. H. Prater	(M. L. A., Bombay).
30.	Mr. U. Srinivasa Mallaya	(M. L. A., Provincial).
31.	Mr. Mr. Kala Venkata Rao	(M. L. A., Provincial).
32.	Mr. P. Kakkan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
33.	Mr. M. C. Virabahu Pillai	
34.	Mr. T. J. M. Wilson	(M. L. A., Provincial).
35.	Mr. V. C. Kesava Rao	
36.	Mr. K. Santhanam	(Former M. L. A., Central. Member of Congress Expert Committee and Joint Editor, *Hindusthan Times*).
37.	Mr. B. Shiva Rao	(Journalist).
38.	Mr. H. Sitarama Reddi	
39.	Mr. C. Subramaniam	
40.	Mr. V. Subramaniam	

41. Mr. P. M. Velayudhapani	
42. Mr. O. V. Alagesan	
43. Mr. K. Chandramouli	(M. L. A., Provincial),
44. Mr. L. Krishnaswami Bharathi	(Former M. L. A., Provincial).
45. Mrs. G. Durga Bai	

Muslims—4 Members :

4 Members nominated by Muslim League :

1. Haji Abdul Sathar H. Issaq Sait	(M. L. A., Central),
2. Mr. K. T. M. Ahmed Ibrahim	(Member, Madras Legislative Council).
3. Mr. A. Mahaboob Ali Baig	(M. L. A,, Provincial).
4. Mr. B. Poker	(M. L. A., Provincial).

BOMBAY

General—19 Members :

19 Members nominated by Congress :

1. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel	(Member, Congress Working Committee, Former Congress President).
2. Mr. Shankarrao Deo	(Former Member of the Congress Working Committee).
3. Mr. B. G. Kher	(Premier of Bombay).
4, Mr. Kanyalal Desai	(President of the Gujrat Provincial Congress Committee).
5. Mr. K. M. Munshi	(Former Home Minister, Bombay).
6. Mr. R. R. Diwakar	(Former President of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee).
7. Dr. Alban D'Souza	(M. L. A., Provincial)
8. Mr. N. V. Gadgil	(M. L. A., Central)
9. Mr. B. M. Gupte	(M. L. A., Provincial)
10. Mr. K. M. Jedhe	(President of the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee).
11. Mr. S. N. Mane	(M. L. A., Provincial).
12, Mrs. Hansa Mehta	(President of the All India Women's Conference).
13. Mr. R. M. Nalwade	(M. L. A., Provincial).
14. Mr. S. Nijalingappa	(President of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee).
15. Mr. S. K. Patil	(President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee).
16. Mr. M. R. Masani	(M. L. A., Provincial).
18. Mr. Shantilal Saha	(Member of the Bombay Legislative Council).
19. Mr. Khandubhai Desai	(M. L. A., Provincial).

Muslim—2 Members :

2 Members nominated by Muslim League :

1. Mr, I. I. Chundrigar	(M. L. A., Provincial, and leader of the Opposition. President of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League),
2. Mr. Abdul Kader Sheikh	(M. L. A., Provincial).

ORISSA

General—9 Members :

8 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Mr. Harekrishna Mahatab	(Premier of Orissa. Former member of the Congress Working Committee).
2. Mr. Biswanath Das	(Former Premier of Orissa).
3. Mrs. Malati Chowdhury	(President of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee).
4. Mr. Bodhram Dube	(Former Minister of Orissa).

5. Mr. B. Dss	(Former M. L. A., Central).
6, Ma. Rajkrishna Bose	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Mr. Nanda kishore Das	(Former Deputy Speaker of the Orissa Legislative Assembly).
8. Mr. Santanu Kumar Das	(M. L. A., Provincial).

1 Independent Member :

I. Mr. Laxminarayan Sahu	(M. L. A., Provincial).

UNITED PROVINCES

General—47 Members :

44 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru	(President of the Indian National Congess).
2. Mr. Purshottamdas Tandan	(Speaker of the U. P. Legislative Assembly).
3. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant	(Premier of U. P. Member of the Congress Working Committee).
4. Sri S. Radhakrishnan	(Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University).
5. Acharya J. B. Kripalani	(Former General Secretary of the Indian National Congress).
6. Pandit Shri Krishna Dutt Paliwal	(M. L. A., Central).
7. Sardar Jogendra Singh	(M. L. A., Central).
8. Mr. A. Dharam Dass	(M. L. A., Provincial. Indian Christian).
9. Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani	
10. Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	((Minister for Health and Local Self-Government, U. P.).
11. Mrs. Purnima Banerjee	(M. L. A., Provincial).
12. Dr. Kailash Nath Katju	(Minister for Justice and Agriculture. U. P.).
13. Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru	(Member of the Council of State; President of the Servants of India Society).
14. Mrs. Kamala Chaudhri	
15. Mr. Dayal Das Bhagat	(M. L. A., Provincial).
16. Mr. Dharam Prakash	
17. Mr. Masuria Din	(M. L. A., Provincial).
18. Mr. Sundar Lal	
19. Mr. Bhagwan Din	(M. L. A.; Provincial).
20. Mr. Pragi Lal	
21. Seth Damodar Swarup	(M. L. A., Central. President of the U. P, Provincial Congress Committee).
22. Pandit Govind Malaviya	(M. L. A., Central).
23. Mr. Balkrishna Sharma	(M. L. A., Central).
24. Mr. Sri Prakasa	(M. L. A., Central).
25. Mr. Mohan Lal Saxsena	(M. L. A., Central).
26. Mr. Ram Chandra Gupta	
27. Mr. Maheswar Dayal Seth	(Landholder).
28. Mr. Hargovind Pant	(M. L. A.. Provincial).
29. Mr. Hariharnath Shastri	
30. Mr. Shibban Lal Saxena	
31. Mr. Ajit Prasad Jain	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Parliamentary Secretary).
32. Mr. Vishambhar Dayal Tripathi	(M. L. A., Provincial).
33. Mr. Feroz Gandhi	(Parsee).
34. Mr. Kamlapati Tewari	(M. L. A., Provincial).
35. Mr. R. V. Dhulekar	(M. L. A., Provincial).
36. Mr. Algu Rai Shastri	(M. L. A., Provincial)·
37. Mr. Phool Singh	(M. L. A.,) Provincial).
38. Mr. Venkatesh Narain Tewari	(M, L. A., Provincial. Former Parliamentary Secretary).
39. Mr. Gopinath Srivastava	(Former Parliamentary Secretary).
40. Mr. Gopal Narain	(M. L. A., Provincial).
41. Mr. Baushi Dhar Misra	(M. L. A., Provincial).
42. Mr. Khurshed Lal	
43. Mr. Jaspat Rai Kapoor	

44. Acharya Jugal Kishore	(M. L. A.. Provincial. Former Parliamentary Secretary. General Secretary of the Congress Assembly Party).

3 Independent Members :

1. Raja Jagannath Baksh Singh	(M. L. A., Provincial).
2. Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava	(Industrialist and former member of the Viceroy's Executive Council).
3. Sir Padampat Singhania	(Industrialist).

Muslim—8 Members:

7 Members Nominated by Muslim League :

1. Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan	(M. L. A., Central. Member, Muslim League Working Committee).
2. Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman	(M. L. A., Provincial, and leader of the Opposition. Member of the All-India Muslim League Working Committee).
3. Maharaj Kumar Amir Haider Khan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
4. Begum Aizaz Rasul	(Member of the Legislative Council and leader of the Muslim League party in the Council).
5. Mr. S. M. Rizwanullah	(M. L. A., Provincial and Secretary of the Muslim League Assembly Party).
6. Maulvi Aziz Ahmad Khan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Maulana Hasrat Mohani	(M. L. A., Provincial).

1 Member Nominated by Congress :

1. Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai	(Revenue Minister. U. P. Member of the Congress Working Committee),

C. P. & BERAR

General—16 Members :

16 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Mr. Guru Agamdas Agarmandas	(M. L. A., Provincial).
2. Mr. Laxmam Shrawan Bhatkar	(Former M. L. A., Provincial).
3. Mr. Brijlal Nandlal Biyani	(Member of the Council of State. President of the Berar Provincial Congresss Committee).
4. Thakur Chhedilal	(M. L. A., Provincial).
5. Dr. Punjabrao Shamrao Deshmukh	(Minister of Education in C.P., 1930-33).
6. Mr. Shankara Tryambak Dharmadhikari	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Mr. Cecil Edward Gibbon	(M. L. A., Punjab Anglo-Indian).
8. Sir Hari Singh Gour	(Former M. L. A., Central).
9. Seth Goviddas	(M. L. A., Central).
10. Mr. V. R. Kalappa	(M. L. A., Provincial).
11. Mr. Hari Vishnu Kamath	(Forward Bloc).
12. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	(Indian Christian, Punjab).
13. Mr. Hemchandra Jagoji Khandekar	(M. L. A., Provincial).
14. Mr. Bhagwantrao Annabhan Mandoli	(M. L. A., Provincial).
15. Pandit Ravi Shankar Sukla	(Premier of C. P.)
16. Mr. Rustomji Khursedji Sidhwa	(M. L. A., Sind. Parsee).

Muslim—1 Member :

1 Member Nominated by Muslim League :

1. Mr. Kazi Syed Karimuddin	(M. L. A., Provincial).

BIHAR

General—31 Members :

28 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Dr. Rajendra Prasad	(Member of the Congress Working Committee. Former Congress President).

2. Mr. Bhagwat Prasad ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
3. Mr. Anugraha Narayan Singh ... (Finance Minister of Bihar).
4. Dr. Raghunandan Prasad ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
5. Mr. Jagjivan Ram ... (M. L. A., Provincial. Former Parliamentary Secretary).
6. Mr. Phulan Prasad Varma ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Mr. Mahesh Prasad Sinha ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
8. Mr. Sarangdhar Singh ... (M. L. A., Provincial. Former Parliamentary Secy.).
9. Mr. Rameswar Prasad Singh ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
10. Mr. Devendranath Samanta ... (Adibasi).
11. Mr. Jadubans Sahay ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
12. Amiyo Kumar Ghosh ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
13. Mr. Satynarain Sinha ... (M. L. A., Central).
14. Mr. Kameleshwari Prasad Yadav ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
15. Mr. Dipnarain Singh
16. Ramnarain Singh ... (M. L. A., Central).
17. Mr. Guptanath Singh ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
18. Mr. Jagdish Narain Lal ...
19. Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha ... (Premier of Bihar).
20. Mr. Boniface Larke ... (Adibasi).
21. Mr. Brajeswar Prasad ...
22. Mr. Chandrika Ram ...
23. Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mahtha ... (Member of the Council of State).
24. Deshbandhu Gupta ... (Delhi Journalist).
25. Mr. Banarsi Prasad Jhunjhunwala ... (M. L. A., Central).
26. Dr. P. K. Sen ... (Former Judge, Patna High Court).
27. Mrs Sarojini Naidu ... (Former Congress President).
28. Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha ... (M. L. A., Provincial. Former Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University).

3 Independent Members:

1. The Maharaja of Darbhanga ... (President, All-India Land-holders' Association).
2. Rai Bahadur Shyam Nandan Sahay ... (Member of the Legislative Council).
3. Mr. Jaipal Singh ... (Adibasi).

Muslim—5 Members :

5 Members Nominated by Muslim League:

1. Mr. Hussain Imam ... (Member of the Council of State).
2. Mr. Latifur Rahman ... (M. L. A., Provincial. Member of the All-India Muslim League Working Committee).
3. Mr. Tajamal Hussain ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
4. Saiyid Jaffar Imam ... (M. L. A, Provincial).
5. Mr. Muhammad Tahir ... (M. L. A. Provincial)'

CROOG

Mr. C. M. Punachcha
(Congress)

DELHI

Mr. Asaf Ali ... (Congress : M. L. A.—Central)

AJMER-MERWARA

Mr. Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava ... (Congress : M. L. A., Central).

PUNJAB

General—8 Members :

6 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Dr. Gopi Chand Bhargava ... M. L. A., Provincial).
2. Pandit Shri Ram Sharma ... (M. L. A., Provincial).
3. Bakhshi Sir Tek Chand ... (Former Judge of Lahore High Court).

4. Sardar Prithvi Singh Azad	(M. L. A., Provincial).
5. Diwan Chaman Lal	M. L. A , Central).
6. Mr. Mehr Chand Khanna	(Finance Minister, North-West Frontier Province).

2. Members Nominated by the United Party :

1. Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Suraj Mal	(M. L. A., Provincial).
2. Chaudhri Harbhaj Ram	(M. L. A., Provincial).

Muslim—16 Members :

15 Members Nominated by Muslim League :

1. Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah	(President of the All-India Muslim League. M. L A, Central).
2. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar	Member of the Working Committee, All-India Muslim League, from N.W.F.P).
3. Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot	(M. L. A., Provincial, Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly. Mem-of the Working Committee, All-India Muslim League).
4. Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana	(M. L. A., Provincial. General Secy. of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League).
5. Sir Feroz Khan Noon	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council).
6. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Prof. Abu Bakar Ahmad Haleem	(Professor, Aligarh University. M. L. A., U. P).
8. Mian Muhammad Iftikharud-Din	(M. L. A. Provincial. Former President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee).
6. Chaudhri Muhammad Hassan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
10. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Karamat Ali	(M. L. A., Provincial. Member of the Working Committee, All-India Muslim League).
11, Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz	(M. L. A., Provincial).
12. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang	(M. L. A., Central).
13. Khan Bahadur Chaudhri Nazir Ahmad Khan	
14. Dr. Malik Omar Hayat	(Principal of the Islamia College, Lahore).
15. Syed Amjad Ali	(Former M. L. A., Provincial).

1 Member nominated by the Unionist Party :

1. Nawab Sir Muzaffar Ali Khan Qazilbash	(Revenue Minister, Punjab).

Sikh—4 Seats :

All Nominations withdrawn

N. W. F. PROVINCE

Muslim—3 Members :

2 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad	(Former President of the Indian National Congress. Member of the Congress Working Committee).
2. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan	(Member of the Congress Working Committee).

1 Member Nominated by Muslim League :

Khan Sardar Bahadur Khan	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Speaker, N.W. F.P. Assembly).

SIND

General—1 Member :

1 Member Nominated by Congress :

1. Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram	(Former Member of the Congress Working Committee).

Muslim—3 Members :

3 Members Nominated by Muslim League :

1 Khan Bahadur M. A. Khuhro	(Minister for Public Works, Sind).
2. Pirzada Abdus Sattar	(Minister for Education, Health and Local Self-Govt., Sind).
3. Mr. M. H. Gazdar	(President of the Sind Provincial Muslim League).

BALUCHISTAN

Nawab Mohammad Khan Jogazai	(Independent).

BENGAL

General—27 Members :

25 Members Nominated by Congress :

1. Mr. Frank Reginald Anthony	(President, Anglo-Indian Association).
2. Mr. Satya Ranjan Bakhsi	(Journalist).
3. Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee	(M. L. A., Provincial).
4. Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose	(Member Congress Working, Committee, Leader of the Congress Party, Central Assembly).
5. Mr. Raj Kumar Chakravarty	(Professor, Bangabasi College).
6. Mr. Radhanath Das	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7. Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta	(M. L. A ; Provincial).
8. Mr. Surendra Mohan Ghose	(President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee).
9. Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh	(Former Member, Congress Working Committee).
10. Mr. Arun Chandra Guha	
11. Mr. Damber Singh Gurung	(M. L. A.. Provincial).
12. Mr. Debi Prasad Khaitan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
13. Sir Uday Chand Mahtab (Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Burdwan).	(M. L. A., Provincial).
14. Mr. Jnanendra Chandra Majumdar	(M. L. A., Provincial).
15. Mr. Ashutosh Mallick	(M. L. A., Provincial)
16. Dr. H. C. Mookherjee	(Christian, Retired Professor, Calcutta University).
17. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee	(M. L. A., Provincial. President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha).
18. Mr. Hem Chandra Naskar	(M. L. A., Provincial).
19. Mr. Prasanna Deb Raikut	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Minister, Bengal).
20. Mrs. Lila Roy	
21. Mr. Dhananjay Roy	(M. L. A., Provincial).
22. Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy	(Leader of Congress Party in Bengal Assembly).
23. Mr. Prafulla Chandra Sen	
24. Mr. Priya Ranjan Sen	(Lecturer, Calcutta University).
25. Mr. Pramatha Ranjan Thakur	(M. L. A., Provincial).

1 Member Nominated by the Scheduled Castes Federation :

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar	(Former Member, Viceroy's Executive Council).

1 Member Nominated by the Communist Party :

Mr. Somnath Lahiri	

Muslim—33 Members :

32 Members Nominated by Muslim League:

1.	Khan Bahadur A. M. Abdul Hamid	(M. L. A., Provincial).
2.	Khan Bahadur Abdulla-Al-Mahmood	
3.	Mr. Md. Abdullahel Baqui	(M. L. A., Provincial).
4.	Mr. Abul Hashem	(M. L. A., Provincial. Secretary of Bengal Provincial Muslim League).
5.	Mr. Abdul Kasem Khan	
6.	Mr. M. S. Ali	
7.	Khan Bahadur M. Altaf Ahmed	
8.	Sir M. Azizul Haque	(Former Member of Viceroy's Executive Council).
9.	Khan Bahadur Bazul Karim	
10.	Khan Bahadur Edrahim Khan	(M. L. A., Provincial).
11.	Mr. Fazlur Rahman	(M. L. A., Provincial).
12.	Mr. Formuzul Huq	
13.	Khan Bahadur Ghiyasuddin Pathan	M. L. A., Bengal).
14.	Mr. Hamidul Huq Chowdhury	
15.	Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy	(Premier of Bengal).
16.	Dr. I. H. Qureshi	(Professior, Dalhi Uniniversity).
17.	Mr. M. A. H. Ispahani	(Member of League Working Committee).
18.	Nawabzada Lisquat Ali Khan	(M. L. A., Central. Secretary of the League).
19.	Dr. Mahmud Hussain	(Reader, Dacca University).
20.	Mr. Mazharul Huq	(Professor, Dacca Univercity).
21.	Mr. Mohammad Hassan	
22.	Mr. Mohammad Hussain Malik	
23.	Mr. Mujibar Rahman Khan	
24.	Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin	(Former Premier of Bengal).
25.	Mr. K. Nooruddin	
26.	Mr. Raghib Ahsan	
27.	Mr. Serajul Islam	(M. L. A., Provincial).
28.	Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani	(President, Jamiat-ul-Islam).
29.	Mr. K. Shahabuddin	(Former Minister, Bengal).
30.	Begum S. S. Ikramullah	
31.	Mr. Tamizuddin Khan	(M. L. A., Central).
32.	Shahzada Yusuf Mirza	

1 Member Nominated by Krishak-Praja Party:

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq	M. L. A., Provincial. Former Premier of Bengal).

ASSAM

General—7 Members :

7 Members Nominated by Congress:

1.	Mr. Gopinath Bardoloi	(Premier of Assam).
2.	Mr. Basanta Kumar Das	(Home Minister, Assam),
3.	Rev. J. J. M. Nichols Roy	(Minister, Assam. Christian).
4.	Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhury	(M. L. A., Central. Former Minister, Assam).
5.	Mr. Omeo Kumar Das	(M. L. A., Provincial).
6.	Mr. Dharanidhar Basu-matari	(M. L. A., Provincial).
7.	Mr. Akshay Kumar Das	(M. L. A., Provincial).

Muslims—3 Members :

3 Members Nominated by Muslim League:

1.	Sir Muhammad Saadulla	(M. L. A., Provincial. Pormer Premier of Assam).
2.	Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhury	(M. L. A., Provincial. Former Minister of Assam).
3.	Maulvi Abdul Hamid	(M. L. A., Provincial).

PARTIES IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

SECTION A—(MADRAS, BOMBAY, ORISSA, U. P., C. P. & BIHAR, COORG, DELHI, AJMER-MERWARA)

Congress—164 (162 General, 2 Muslim)
Muslim League—19 (Muslim).
Independent—7 (General).

SECTION B—(PUNJAB, N. W. F. PROVINCE, SIND, BALUCHISTAN)

Congress—9 (7 General, 2 Muslim).
Muslim League—19 (Muslim).
Unionist Party—3 (2 General, 1 Muslim).
Independent—1 (Muslim).
(All Sikh seats—4—are vacant).

SECTION C—(BENGAL, ASSAM)

Congress—32 (General).
Muslim League—35 (Muslim).
Communist—1 (General).
Scheduled Castes Federation—1 (General).
Krishak Proja Party—1 (Muslim).

GRAND TOTAL—Congress—201.

Muslim League—73.
Independent—8.
Union Party—3.
Communist—1.
Scheduled Castes Federation—1.
Krishak Praja Party—1.

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Sikhs (Vacant)— 4

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Proceedings of the Assembly

Opening Day—New Delhi—9th December 1946

"A constitution reared for immortality" was held up as the ideal before the Constituent Assembly this morning by Dr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, temporary Chairman, in his inaugural address to India's First Constituent Assembly which opened here this morning. He drew attention to the American constitution, which it had been claimed, embodied this ideal, and said that that constitution was one which should be carefully studied by the Indian Constituent Assembly, not necessarily for wholesale adoption but for judicious adaptation to the necessities and requirements of India. The American constitution, he pointed out, was based on "a series of agreements as well as a series of compromises" and speaking from fifty years' experience of public life, he said that "reasonable agreements and judicious compromises are nowhere more called for than framing a constitution for a country like India."

Dr. Sinha recalled that the first definite reference to a Constituent Assembly, though not under the particular name, was found in a statement of Mahatma Gandhi in 1922. The idea of a Constituent Assembly as the only direct means for the framing of a Constitution in India, Dr. Sinha said, came to be entertained and accepted by the two major political parties in 1940, with this difference that while the Congress desired one Constituent Assembly for India as a whole, the Muslim League wanted two Constituent Assemblies, in accordance with its demand for two separate States in the country.

Dr. Sinha invoked Divine blessings that "your proceedings may be marked not only by good sense, public spirit and genuine patriotism, but also by wisdom, toleration, justice and fairness to all; and above all with a vision which may restore India to her pristine glory and give her a place of honour and equality among the great nations of the world" ; for, he added, "where there is no vision, the people perish."

Some 205 representatives, including nine women, from all the provinces were present. They sat in parallel rows facing the presidential dais in the brilliantly-lighted, domed library of the Council Chamber. Seated in separate provincial blocs they were a variegated gathering, dressed in the many different garbs of the provinces they came from. Muslim League members were absent.

Those occupying the front row included Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad, Sardar Patel, Acharya Kripalani, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mrs. Naidu, Mr. Harekrishna Mehtab, Pandit Pant, Dr. Ambedkar, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Mr. C. Rajagopalchari and Mr. Asaf Ali. Mr. Sarat Chadra Bose and Dr. Ambedkar sat in the same bench. Mrs. Kripalani had a seat immediately behind her husband.

Dr. Sinha's Speech

Hon'ble Members of the First Constituent Assembly,—

I am deeply beholden to you for your having agreed to accept me as the first President of your Constituent Assembly, which will enable me to assist you in transacting the preliminary business of the Assembly—such as the election of a permanent President, and thereafter the framing of the rules of business, the appointment of various Committees, and settling the question of giving publicity to, or keeping confidential, your proceedings—which will ultimately lead you to crown your labours by formulating a suitable and stable constitution for an Independent India. In expressing my sense of appreciation of your great kindness, I cannot conceal from myself that I feel—comparing small things with great—that I am, on the present occasion—in the position in which Lord Palmerston found himself when Queen Victoria offered him the highest Order of Chivalry, namely the Knighthood of the Charter. In accepting the queen's offer, Lord Palmerston wrote to a friend as follows: "I have gratefully accepted Her Majesty's gracious offer as, thank God, there is no question of any damned merit about the honour conferred on me." I say I find myself more or less in the same position, for you have agreed to accept me as your President on the sole ground that I am, in age, the senior-most member of the Assembly. Whatever the ground, however, on which you have chosen me as your first President, I am nonetheless profoundly grateful to you. I have had, in my fairly long life, several honours conferred on me in recognition of my services as a humble worker in public interest, but I assure you that I regard your mark of favour as a signal honour, which I shall cherish throughout the rest of my life.

THE SWISS MODEL

On this historic and memorable occasion, you will not grudge, I am sure, if I venture to address to you some observations on certain aspects of what is called a Constituent Assembly. This political method of devising a constitution for a country has not been known to our fellow-subjects in British Constitution, there is no such thing as a constituent law, it being a cherished privilege of the British Parliament, as the sole sovereign authority, to make and unmake all laws, including the constitutional law of the country. As such, we have to look to countries other than Britain to be able to form a correct estimate of the position of a Constituent Assembly. In Europe, the oldest Republic, that of Switzerland, has not had a Constituent Law, in the ordinary sense of that term, for it came into existance, on a much smaller scale than it now exists, due to historic causes and accidents, several centuries back. Nevertheless, the present constitutional system of Switzerland has several notable and instructive features, which have strongly been recommended by qualified authorities to Indian constitution-makers, and I have no doubt that this great Assembly will study carefully the Swiss Constitution and try to utilize it to the best advantage in the interest of preparing a suitable constitution for a free India.

The only other State in Europe, to the constitution of which we could turn with some advantage, is that of France, the first Constituent Assembly of which (called "The French National Assembly") was convoked in 1789, after the French Revolution had succeeded in overthrowing the French monarchy. But the French Republican system of Government had been changed since then, from time to time, and is even now, more or less, in the melting pot. Though, therefore, you may not be able to derive as much advantage from a study of the French system of constituent law as that of the Swiss, that is no reason why you should not seek to derive what advantage you can in the preparation of the task before you, by a study of it.

FRENCH AND AMERICAN EXAMPLES

As a matter of fact, the French constitution-makers, who met in 1789, at the first Constituent Assembly of their country, were themselves largely influenced by the work done but a couple of years earlier in 1787, by the historic Constitutional Convention held at Philadelphia by the American constitution-makers, for their country. Having thrown off their allegiance to the British King in Parliament, they met and drew up what had been regarded, and justly so, as the soundest, and most practical and workable republican constitution in existence. It is this great constitution, which had been naturally taken as the model for all subsequent constitutions not only of France, but also of the self-governing Dominions of the British Commonwealth like Canada, Australia, and South Africa; and I have no doubt that you will also in the nature of things, pay in the course of your work, greater attention to the provisions of the American Constitution than to those of any other.

I have referred above to the self-governing constitutions of the great Dominions of the British Commonwealth being based on, to a large extent, if not actually derived from the American constitutional system. The first to benefit by the American system was Canada, the historic Convention of which country for drawing up a self-governing constitution met in 1864, at Quebec. This Convention drew up the Canadian constitution, which was subsequently embodied in what is still on the Statute Book as the British North American Act, passed by the British Parliament in 1867. You may be interested to hear that the Quebec Convention consisted of only 33 delegates from all the provinces of Canada, and that convention of 33 representatives issued as many as 74 resolutions, which were afterwards duly incorporated *in toto* in the British North American Act, under the provisions of which the first self-governing Dominion of the British Commonwealth of Canada came into existence in 1867. The British Parliament accepted the Canadian Convention scheme in its entirety except for making only one drafting amendment. I hope and pray that your labours may be crowned with a similar success.

The American constitutional system was more or less adopted in the schemes prepared for framing the constitutions of Australia and South Africa, which shows that the results achieved by the American Convention held at Philadelphia in 1787, had been accepted by the world as a model for framing independent federal constitutions for various countries. It is for these reasons that I have felt justified in inviting your attention to the American system of constituent and constitutional law as one which should be carefully studied by you—not necessarily for wholesale adoption but for the judicious adaptation of its provisions to the necessities and requirements of your own country, with such modifications as may be necessary or essential owing to the peculiar conditions of our social, economic and political life. I have done so, as according to Munro—a standard authority on the subject—the American constitution is based on "a series of agreements as well as a series of compromises," I may venture to add, as a result of my long experience of public life for now nearly half a century, that reasonable agreements and judicious compromises are nowhere more called for than in framing a constitution for a country like India.

In commending to you for your careful consideration and acceptance, with reasonable agreements and judicious compromises, the fundamental principles of the American system, I cannot do better than quote the striking observations on the subject of the greatest British authority, namely Viscount Bryce, who in his monumental work, called the *American Commonwealth*, writes as follows: "Its central or national Government is not a mere League; for it does not wholly depend on the component communities which we call the States. It is in itself a Commonwealth as well as a Union of Commonwealths, because it claims directly the obedience of every citizen, and acts immediately upon him through its courts and executive officers. Still less are the minor communities, the States, mere sub-divisions of the Union, mere creatures of the National Government, like the counties of England or the departments of France. They have over their citizens an authority which is their own and not delegated by the Central Government."

THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY

It may possibly be that in some such scheme, skilfully adapted to our requirements, a satisfactory solution may be found for a constitution for an Independent India, which may satisfy the reasonable expectations and legitimate aspirations of almost all the leading political parties in the country. Having quoted the greatest British authority on the great, inherent merits of the American Constitution, you will, I hope, bear with me a fairly long quotation from the greatest American jurist, Story. In concluding his celebrated book called "Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States", he made certain striking and inspiring observations which I present to you as worthy of your attention :—

"Let the American youth never forget that they possess a noble inheritance, bought by the toils and sufferings and blood of their ancestors : and capable, if wisely improved, and faithfully guarded, of transmitting to their latest posterity all the substantial blessings of life, the peaceful enjoyment of liberty, property, religion and independence. The structure has been erected by architects of consummate skill and fidelity; its foundations are solid. its compartments are beautiful, as well as useful; its arrangements are full of wisdom and order; and its defences are impregnable from without ; it has been reared for immortality, if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title. It may. nevertheless, perish in an hour by the folly, or corruption or negligence of its only keepers, *The People.* Republics are created by the virtue, public spirit and intelligence of the citizens. They fall, when the wise are banished from the public councils, because they dare to be honest and the profligate are rewarded because they flatter the people, in order to betray them."

To quote yet one more leading authority on the almost ideal Constitution of America, James Beck (at one time Solicitor-General of the United States) says in his highly instructive book called, "The Constitution of the United States—Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow".

"Constitutions as governmental panaceas have come and gone; but it can be said of the American Constitution, paraphrasing the noble tribute of Dr. Johnson to the immortal fame of Shakespeare, that the stream of time which has washed away the dissoluble fabric of many other paper constitutions has left almost untouched its adamantine strength. Excepting the first ten amendments, which were virtually a part of the original Charter, only nine others have been adopted in more than one hundred and thirty years. What other form of Government has better stood the test of time?"

My prayer is that the Constitution that you are going to plan may similarly be reared for 'immortality', if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title, and it may be a structure of 'adamantine strengh' which will outlast and overcome all destructive forces.

GENESIS OF THE INDIAN ASSEMBLY

Having invited your attention to some aspects of the question of constitution-making in Europe and America, I may now profitably turn to some aspects of the question in our own country. The first definite reference to a Constituent Assembly (though not under that particular name) I have found in a statement of Mahatma Gandhi, made so far back as 1922. He said, "Swaraj will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression, expressed through an Act of Parliament. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India. The ratification will be a treaty to which Britain will be a party. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed through the freely chosen representatives." The demand made by Mahatma Gandhi for a Constituent Assembly, composed of the "freely chosen representatives" of the people of India, was affirmed, from time to time, by various public bodies and political leaders but it was not till May, 1934 that the Swaraj Party, which was then formed at Ranchi, formulated a scheme in which the following resolution was included. "This Conference claims for India the right of self-determination and the only method of applying that principle is to convene a Constituent Assembly, representative of all sections of the Indian people, to frame an acceptable constitution." The policy embodied in this resolution was approved by the All-India Congress Committee, which met at Patna a few days latter, in May, 1934, and it was thus that the scheme of a Constituent Assembly for framing the Indian Constitution was officially adopted by the Indian National Congress.

CONGRESS AND LEAGUE DECLARATIONS

The above resolution was confirmed at the session of the Congress held at Faizpur in December, 1936. The confirming resolution declared that "the Congress stands for a genuine democratic State in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the Government is under their effective control. Such a State can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly having the power to determine finally the constitution of the country." In

November. 1939, the Congress Working Committee adopted a resolution which declared that "recognition of India's independence and the right of her people to frame their constitution through a Constituent Assembly is essential." I may add that in the resolutions from which I have quoted above (those adopted at the Congress Working Committee of November, 1939, and at the Faizpur session of the Congress of 1936) it was declared that the Constituent Assembly should be elected on the basis of adult suffrage. Since the Congress gave a lead on the subject in 1934, the idea of a Constituent Assembly had come to prevail largely as an article of faith in almost all the politically-minded circles in the country.

But until the adoption of the resolution on Pakistan, in March 1940, by the Muslim League, that political organisation had not favoured the idea of a Constituent Assembly as a proper and suitable method for framing a constitution. After the adoption of that resolution, however, the attitude of the Muslim League seems to have undergone a change in favour of the idea of Constituent Assembly—one for the areas claimed by the League for a separate Muslim State, and the other for the rest of India. Thus, it may be stated that the idea of a Constituent Assembly, as the only direct means for the framing of a constitution in this country, came to be entertained and accepted by the two major political parties in 1940, with this difference that while the Congress desired one Constituent Assembly for India, as a whole, the Muslim League wanted two Constituent Assemblies, in accordance with its demand for two separate States in the country. Any way whether one or two, the idea of a Constituent Assembly being the proper method for the framing of a constitution had clearly dawned by that time on public consciousness in the country, and it was with reference to that great mental upheaval that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared that "it means a nation on the move, fashioning for itself a new Government of its own making through their elected representatives."

It remains to add that the conception of a Constituent Assembly as the most appropriate method for framing the constitution of India had also found favour with the members of the Sapru Committee in the report of which, issued last year (1945), it formulated a definite scheme for the composition of a Constituent Assembly. We are meeting, however, in this Assembly under the scheme propounded by the British Cabinet Mission, which, though differing from the suggestions made on the subject by the Congress, the League, and other political organisations, had devised a scheme which though not by all, had been accepted by many political parties, and also by large sections of the politically-minded classes not belonging to any political party, as one well worth giving a trial, with a view to end the political deadlock, which had obtained for now many years past, and frustrated our aims and aspirations. I have no desire to go further into the merits of the British Cabinet Mission's scheme as that might lead me to trespass on controversial ground, which I have no desire to traverse on the present occasion. I am aware that the British Cabinet Mission have been the subject of acute controversies between some of the political parties amongst us, and I do not want, therefore, to rush in where even political angels might well fear to tread.

CALL TO ASSEMBLY

Hon'ble Members, I fear I have trespassed long on your patience, and should now bring my remarks to a close. My only justification for having detained you so long is the uniqueness of this great and memorable occasion in the history of India, the enthusiasm with which this Constituent Assembly had been welcomed by large sections of our politically-minded classes, the keen interest which matters relating to it had evoked amongst various communities and the prospect which it holds out for the final settlement of the problem of all problems and the issue of all issues, the political independence of India, and her economic freedom. I wish your labours success, and invoke Divine blessings that your proceedings may be marked not only by good sense, public spirit, and genuine patriotism, but also by wisdom, toleration, justice, and fairness to all; and above all with a vision which may restore India to her pristine glory and give her a place of honour and equality among the great nations of the world. Let us not forget to justify the pride of the great Indian poet, Iqbal, and his faith in the immortality of the destiny of our great, historic and ancient country, which he summed up in these two beautiful lines:

Yunano, Misrao, Roma sab mit gaye jahan se,
Baqi abhi talak hai nam o nishan hamara.

It means: "Greece, Egypt, and Rome have all disappeared from the surface of the Earth; but the name and fame of our country has survived the ravages of

Time and the cataclysms of ages." I particularly ask of you for a board and catholic vision, for as the Bible justly teaches us :—

"Where there is no vision the people perish."

Second Day—New Delhi—10th December 1946

Resolution on Rules Committee

A full and animated debate arose on the point whether the rules of procedure framed for the Assembly should be expressly declared to govern the Sections as well. This point was brought up during the discussion on *Acharya Kripalani's* resolution for the setting up of "a committee of fifteen on rules of procedure and other matters." An amendment to the effect that the Committee should be empowered to frame rules not only for the Assembly but for the Sections was moved by Dr. *Suresh Chandra Banerjee* and was eventually adopted, only Dr, *Ambedkar* voting against it.

Acharya Kripalani, moving the resolution, pointed out that in the form in which it was circulated, it provided that "the Committee should report on rules of procedure of the Assembly, Sections and Committees." He decided to drop the words "Sections and Committees," because Sections and Committees were part of the Assembly and the addition of those words were, therefore, superfluous.

Dr. *Suresh Chandra Banerjee* : Is it the intention of the mover that the rules should also apply to Sections ? In my opinion, Sections should be specifically mentioned here, because you know there are difficulties with particular Sections.

Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mookherjee*, supporting Dr. Banerjee, said it would be safe to specify clearly that the rules of procedure of the Assembly should apply to Sections and Committees.

Mr. *Kripalani* : The rules of procedure of the Assembly include rules of procedure of the Sections and Committees.

Dr. *Mookherjee* said that the resolution, as it stood, left it in doubt whether, when the Sections met, they would frame their own rules of procedure. The question would then arise whether the Constituent Assembly had authority to frame rules of procedure for the Section at all. It would then be a question of interpretation whether the Rules Committee was entitled to frame rules for the Sections. As it was the intention that this Committee would frame rules for the Sections, he said that they should make that clear now, so that there might be no ambiguity when Sections were formed.

Babu *Purshottamdas Tandon* supported the amendment.

Acharya Kripalani, intervening in the debate, submitted that the Assembly would make rules of a broad nature and these would apply to Sections and Committees. If any Committees or Sections wanted any additional rules they would be made, subject to the proviso that such rules were not inconsistent with the rules made by the Rules Committee.

Sardar Harnam Singh agreed with Dr. Mookherjee but suggested that the word "including" should not be inserted but the passage should read "......Assembly, its Sections and Committees" His suggestion, he said, was in accord with Cabinet Mission's statement which mentioned Sections as Sections of the Assembly.

Sardar Harnam Singh also urged that ten of the members of the Committee should be elected and the remaining five nominated by the Chairman so as to give adequate representation to important minorities. Otherwise, he was afraid, the work of the Advisory Committee might be regulated to the detriment of some important sections of the House.

Mr. *K. M. Munshi*, supporting Mr. Bannerjee's amendment, said that it would be extremely unwise to omit the words "Sections and Committees" because that would show that the Assembly was not the self-determining and self-governing institution which we insisted it was. "Acharya Kripalani himself mentioned that if we leave the thing as it is, rules could be made whereby you can lay down that Sections and Committees will not have power to make rules which are contrary to or inconsistent with the rules made by this Committee. That itself shows that it is competent for this Procedural Committee to regulate, to some extent, the procedure of the Sections and Committees". In view of the debate that had already taken place it was much better that the words "Sections and Committees" stood rather than leave the matter open to further discussion and points of order later on.

"It should be laid down definitely by this House," said Mr. Munshi, "that the Constituent Assembly is one and indivisible, that the Sections, as already pointed out, are the Sections of the Assembly, and that they may not form themselves into independent bodies which can make their own rules inconsistent with the rules of this Assembly."

Mr. *Basanta Kumar Das* asked for a ruling from the Chairman how far the Constituent Assembly would be entitled to give direction or to examine the work of Sections and of the Advisory Committee.

The *Chairman* said that he had no desire that this ruling should be dragged into the Federal Court and. therefore, would not give any.

Pandit Jawahalal Nehru, intervening in the debate, said: "This resolution was considered to be a formal resolution but from the trend of the discussion it appears there are larger fundamental issues in the minds of Honourable Members. Obviously, we have got those issues in our minds and many of us hold strong views about them. If this discussion goes on, all manner of things, which no doubt will be considered at various stages in the House, will have to be considered now. In this particular issue, I doubt if there is any difference of opinion in the House".

Undoubtedly, said Pandit Nehru, the various Committees and Sections of the Constituent Assembly were a part of the House. Undoubtedly anything that was done in those Committees and Sections which came into conflict with the directions of the Assembly would have to be considered by the House. "As this resolution is drafted—and I had something to do with the drafting—I thought the original draft was the appropriate draft, but when this matter is brought up in the shape of an amendment then obviously it becomes an entirely different matter to oppose that amendment, because that becomes an expression of the view of the House."

The member from Assam had brought the Advisory Committee into the picture. The Advisory Committee obviously and patently had to report to the Constituent Assembly. He took it that all Committees of the House would have to report to it.

Pandit Nehru suggested to Acharya Kripalani to accept the amendment.

Dr. *M. R. Jayakar* said that, on merits, he would have supported the amendment, but there were a few considerations which he wished to urge against an express mention of the words "Sections and Committees". He urged the House to remember that "Sections" included B and C Sections and further that in the B and C Sections, there was the likelihood—almost the certainty—of "a certain group of men who are not present here to-day and who may be present when the Sections begin to function". That group of men was not present in the House to-day owing to a feeling of some hostility. "Would you like at this stage to legislate for them in advance or would you rather leave this question as included in the word. Assembly, instead of rubbing it in too much by the express mention of the word "Sections which means Sections B and C?" he asked. He urged members to consider whether as a matter of expediency they would not let the matter remain where it was, namely, that no rules could be framed by Sections A and B and also C which were in conflict with the rules of the Assembly. "Would you rather not let it rest on this very, very wise provision? Or would you go further and rub the point in by saying that we, here, to-day, in the absence of that group of men, make it necessary that the rules framed by the Assembly will also apply to the Sections, which is absolutely unnecessary, because all the rules of the Assembly include the rules of the sections?

"I would, therefore, suggest this cautious proceeding, in the absence of an important group of men, who are not present here but who are watching these proceedings with very jealous and suspicious eyes, to discover whether you are taking anything out of their hands. In deciding this in anticipation of their arrival, may it not interfere with theirfuture arrival in a friendly atmosphere? Therefore, I suggest that the words stand as in the original resolution of Acharya Kripalani."

Mr. *D. P. Khaitan,* supporting the amendment, said, "I have not the slightest doubt that whether a group of members are present or not, this Assembly has to proceed with its work in its entirety irrespective of the question whether that group decides to join or not to join. We have got to carry on our work and I do hope that as time passes, that group of men will serve the interest of the country. But so long as they are not here, we should go on with our work with our heart in it as if looking at the interests of the country as a whole."

Mr. *S. H. Prater* (Anglo-Indian), supporting Dr. Jayakar's arguments, said that Dr. Jayakar had pointed out the implications of the amendment and it would be good to follow what he had said. "We may all want to do this thing, but not at this stage. There is time for it and, therefore, I whole-heartedly support the resolution as originally moved by Acharya Kripalani."

Mr. *Sarat Chandra Bose* urged that to settle all future disputes, the House should accept the amendment. Referring to Dr. Jayakar's speech, he said: "I do not think it will introduce any conflict at all in future, if this Assembly were to lay down rules of procedure which would govern not only the main Assembly but its Sections and Committees as well. On the contrary, I feel that it would resolve many a conflict in advance. If we are thinking that any conflict may arise between the main Assembly and Sections we had better resolve that conflict now, by including the words, Sections and Committees".

Mr. *B. G. Kher* said that the House ought not to leave any doubt that the Assembly was the supreme body so far as the procedure of the Sections was concerned. After the debate that had taken place, it would be impolitic now to refuse to accept the words, "Sections and Committees". They were not at all certain to-day whether the Sections were going to sit. The way out of it would be to give the proposed Committee powers to co-opt so that if the rules framed were not acceptable to any Section of members or if any suggestions were made, the Committee might from time to time be able to suggest amendments and alterations which could be confirmed, ratified or rejected by the House.

Mr. *Jairamdas Daulatram* said that the Union Constituent Assembly was the supreme body and must have the right to frame rules for its Sections and Committees. On this point no room should be left for any interpretation. At the same time, they had to deal with the possibility that those men who were not present to-day might join them at a later stage. If those developments took place, the suggestion made by Mr. Kher would meet their requirements.

MR. KRIPALANI'S REPLY TO DEBATE

Replying to the debate, *Acharya Kripalani* said that there seemed to be some misapprehension about the scope of work of the Committee and the time during which it would be in existence. "We have absolutely no rules for conducting our business. The rules would be more or less such as guide the proceedings of all assemblies and these would be of a general nature. There is no doubt in my mind that more rules will have to be framed by Committees themselves and by Sections. They may be called bye-rules or by any other name. This Committee will not frame exhaustive rules. As for the question of co-option it need not arise at this stage. This Committee is not going to be permanent.

"When any Section of the House that is absent to-day decides to join, then, if they have any objection to the rules that have been framed, this House can always order them to be revised. I think it is a bad method to appoint a Committee and give it powers to co-opt when that Committee is being selected by the Single Transferable Vote."

Referring to Sardar Harnam Singh's suggestion that five representatives of minorities be co-opted, he said: "There is already a provision that the members of this Committee be selected by the Single Transferable Vote and that includes all minorities. It is not good that minorities should be appointed by these ten people." He, therefore, opposed the suggestion.

As he found that there was a large body of opinion for including the words, "Sections and Committees," Acharya Kripalani accepted Mr. Banerjee's amendment, (Cheers). The amendment was passed, only Dr. Ambedkar voting against it.

COMMITTEE TO HAVE POWER TO CO-OPT

The House accepted an amendment moved by *Sardar Ujjal Singh*, giving the Procedure Committee power to co-opt, if necessary, upto five members. Sardar Ujjal Singh said that if the Committee was not given power to co-opt, a group consisting of four or five members would not be able to get representation.

The motion was declared carried.

A few minor amendments were accepted and the resolution as amended was passed.

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Earlier, the Constituent Assembly spent half an hour discussing a lengthy resolution prescribing procedure for the election of a permanent Chairman. Acharya Kripalani formally moved the resolution and Pandit Nehru seconded. Two verbal amendments were suggested by Mr. Punjab Rao Deshmukh. Mr. K. Santanam invited the Chair to interpret what would be the effect of the amendments.

Dr. Singh: I am not here to interpret, Interpretation is a most dangerous thing (Laughter).

After a brief debate in which Mr. Ananthasayanam Iyengar and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari took part the resolution was passed in its original from with the addition of a clause suggested by Mr. H. V. Kamath to enable any nominee to withdraw if he liked.

The House adopted a resolution moved by Pandit Nehru for the adoption, with such modifications as the Chairman might, in his absolute discretion, permit of the rules and standing orders of the Central Legislative Assembly pending the framing by the Constituent Assembly of its own rules and procedure.

The Houe passed another resolution moved by Pandit Nehru confirming the existing organisation of the office of the Constituent Assembly. The Chairman, Dr. Sinha, said amid cheers, "In the very few days it has been my privilege to work with Sir Narasingha Rau (Constitutional Adviser) and his staff, I have received greatest possible assistance and I am sure they will go on giving the same valuable assistance and co-operation. The Assembly then adjourned.

Third Day—New Delhi—11th. December 1946

Dr. Rajendra Prasad Elected President

Dr. *Rajendra Prasad* took the chair today as permanent President of the Constituent Assembly amid enthusiastic cheers.

A simple ceremony preceded his installation. The temporary Chairman, Dr. Sinha, announced that two valid nomination papers so far received proposed Dr. Rajendra Prasad's name, and said : "I hereby declare Dr. Rajendra Prasad duly elected permanent Chairman of this Assembly." (Loud cheers).

Dr. Sinha added : "My first duty as temporary Chairman is to request that Acharya Kripalani and Maulana Azad will do us the favour on behalf of the Constituent Assembly to approach the elected President to bring him on to the chair." (Cheers and laughter).

Maulana Azad walked up to Dr. Rajendra Prasad and gripped him by the right arm, while Acharya Kripalani stood by the left and the three went up to the dais, where Dr. Prasad sat on a chair by the side of the temporary Chairman. Cries of "Inquibal Zindabad" and "Jai Hind" rang out as he sat.

Speeches felicitating the new Chairman then followed.

TASK BEFORE ASSEMBLY

Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan in offering his congratutations to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, pointed out that the Constituent Assembly had met to frame a constitution to effect the withdrawal of British control—political, economic and military—and establish a Free and Independent India. If successful, this transfer of authority would be the biggest and least bloody of all transfers in human history.

Referring to Indo-British relations, Sir Sarvapalli said that the first Britisher to arrive in this country was a Jesuit missionary in 1579. He was followed by other merchants who came to trade but stayed to rule. In 1765, the authority was transferred to the East India Company. Later, it was gradually subordinated to and replaced by the authority of Parliament, and it had been continuing till now on the famous principle enunciated by Cecil Rhodes, a principle fundamental to Imperialism—philanthropy puls five per cent.

Right through there had been protests against British rule. All these protests became canalised when the Indian National Congress was established. The Congress adopted mild methods till the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, when it became aggressive. In 1930, the Congress adopted the resolution for the Independence of India and we are now here to give effect to that resolution.

The British were empirics from beginning to end. It was Lord Palmerston who said : "We have no eternal principles; we have only eternal interests." 'When they take any particular line of activity," said Sir Sarvapalli. "you may take it that it is not willing surrender of power or authority, but it is a response to the historic necessities of the case."

Continuing, Sir Sarvapalli said the British introduced the communal electorates in India with the intention of keeping the people apart. The higher mind of British advised local officials that they would be betraying the trust imposed on them by foisting communal electorates, that they would be injecting poison into the body politic which could only be removed, if at all at the cost of a civil war. "We know how those anticipations are getting realised to-day."

The latest statement of H.M.G. on the Cabinet Plan indicated that it was not in human nature to surrender power easily (hear, hear). The playing of one faction againt another was unworthy of a great people and would embitter the relations between this country and Great Britain. It was essential for them to understand that if an act was done, it must be with the utmost grace."

INDIA'S NEW CONSTITUTION

The Constitution the Assembly would be drawing up, Sir Sarvapalli urged, should embody the dreams and passions, the ideals and aspirations of all who belonged to this country. It must be based on the consent of all and respect the right of all people belonging to this great land. "We have been kept apart; it is our duty now to find each other."

Referring to the Muslim League's abstention from the Assembly, Sir Sarvapalli said: "We all deplore, as the speakers yesterday and the day before deplored, the abstention of the representatives of the Muslim League from this Constituent Assembly. We take it that it will only be temporary, for their co-operation is absolutely essential for the success of any constitution which we may draw up. Our hunger, our poverty, our disease, our malnutrition, are common to all. Take the psychological ills from which we suffer, the loss of human dignity, the slavery of the mind, the stunting of sensibilities and the shame of subjection. These are common to all—Hindus or Muslims, Princes or peasants. The chains may be a gold, but they are still chains that matter. The Princes will have to realise that they are slaves in this country. (Hear, hear). Earth and heaven combined to make them belong to one country. It is essential, therefore, for any constitution which is drawn up to make all the citizens realise that their basic privileges—education, social and economic—are afforded to them, that there will be cultural autonomy, that nobody is going to be suppressed. It is going to be a constitution which will be democratic in the true sense of the term, where political freedom will merge into economic freedom and equity and which will make every individual feel that he should be proud to belong to this great land."

SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF ASSEMBLY

Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar said that the most onerous of Dr. Rajendra Prasad's tasks as Chairman would be the "defeating of all attempts at weakening or whitting down the sovereign powers of the Assembly.

For the task which the Assembly had taken upon itself, he said, it was sovereign in every sense of the word. That its members had been brought together by the machinery employed by the present Government of India did not detract from that sovereignty (hear, hear). The constitution of the Assembly derived its authority not from the fact that its authors were three members of H.M.G., but from the fact that the proposals made therein had been accepted by the people of this country (hear, hear). Any limitation on the powers of the Assembly, which were indicated in the Cabinet Mission's statement "are thus self-imposed, imposed by ourselves on this Assembly, and the document and its subsequent exposition by its authors have made it clear that this Assembly has got the constituent power of amending its constitution, of varying or adding to what is provided for in that document, not excluding even what are declared to be its fundamentals. The law of the constitution of this Assembly does not vest in any outside authority, judicial or otherwise, the interpretation of any provision.

Sir Gopalaswamy went on, "the task before the Assembly is not merely one of settling the constitution. It also includes deciding the method of its implemenetation so far as India and her people are concerned. In other words, we have to take over power from those who are in possession of it. The method of that taking over of power will be one to be decided by this Assembly. The fact that H. M. G. should claim to decide the mechanics of the transfer of power to which, in substanca, they are already committed, does not, in my view, detract from the sovereignty of this Assembly so far as its task is concerned."

Dr. Rajendra Prasad's election, said Sir Gopalaswamy, was a supreme mark of the unstined confidence that the Assembly and the country as a whole reposed in him. "It is not so much an honour to him. He has really honoured us by accepting the invitation that we have extended to him." (Cheers).

Other speakers included Mr. Muniswami Pillai, Sardar Ujjal Singh, the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, Dr. Alban D' Souza, Mr. S. Lahiri and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The latter remarked that the Frontier Muslims sided with the Congress in upholding the liberty of the country and fighting for the independence of India. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu referred to her long friendship with Dr. Rajendra Prasad and said he deserved the tributes paid to him.

DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD'S REPLY

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, on assuming the presidential chair, referred to the difficulties encountered in framing a truly sovereign constitution and said this was common to all countries. There was no reason, therefore, he said, why this Assembly should not succeed as in other countries, if all of them displayed unity of purpose and a desire to understand one another's point of view. Dr. Rajendra Prasad also referred to the absence of Muslim League members in the Assembly and expressed the hope that they would soon decide to occupy their seats and participate in framing a constitution for the good of the people of this country.

Stressing the self-governing and self-determining power of the Assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad said: "I am aware that this Assembly has been born with certain limitations placed on it from its birth. We may not forget, disregard or ignore these limitations in the course of our proceedings and in arriving at our decisions. But I know, too, that in spite of these limitations, the Assembly is a self-governing and self-determining, independent body in whose proceedings no outside authority can interfere and whose decisions no one outside can upset, alter or modify." (Cheers). Indeed, it is in the power of this Constituent Assembly to get rid of and demolish the very limitations which have been attached to it at its birth and I hope that you, Ladies and Gentlemen, who have come here to frame the constitution of an Independent and Free India, will be able to get rid of these limitations and place before the world a model constitution, that will satisfy the people of all groups and communities and religions inhabiting this vast land and will ensure to every one freedom of action, of thought, of belief, and of worship, which will guarantee to everyone opportunities of rising to his highest, which will guarantee to everyone freedom in all respects. I hope and trust that this Constituent Assembly will in course of time, be able to develop strength as all such assemblies have done."

"It is most regrettable that many seats are unoccupied to-day in this Assembly. I am hoping that our friends of the Muslim League will soon come to occupy these places and will be glad to participate in this great work of creating a constitution for our people which according to the experience of all other nations of the world and according to our own experience, our own traditions and our own peculiar conditions, will guarantee to everyone all that they can require to be guaranteed, and will not leave any room for any complaint from any side (cheers). I am hoping also that you will do your best to achieve this great objective. Above all, what we need is freedom and as someone has said, nothing is more valuable than the freedom to be free. Let us hope that as a result of the labours of this Constituent Assembly, we shall have achieved freedom and be proud of it." (Cheers).

Fourth Day—New Delhi—12th December 1946

The Assembly adjourned to-day without transacting any business as some members wanted time to study the resolution on *Declaration of Objectives*, which Pandit Nehru was to move.

The President, Dr. *Rajendra Prasad* said: "There is no doubt the resolution is a very important one, and I should not like any member to feel that he has not had sufficient time to consider it. So if the House so desires, I am prepared to adjourn this discussion till to-morrow."

Fifth Day—New Delhi—13th December 1946

Resolution on Declaration of Objectives

In the Assembly this morning, *Pandit Jawharlal Nehru*, in one of the greatest speeches of his career and one of the most memorable it is the privilege of anyone to hear, introduced the resolution outlining the objectives which, the future constitution of India should aim at and towards which the Constituent Assembly should address its labours. The introduction of the resolution and his speech, both in Hindustani and English, took exactly one hour and the House—which since its inauguration, one must admit, had never been in good cheer following the publication of the British Government's statement of December 6—took heart and was revivified after listening to the quiet, solemn and determined words of Pandit Nehru affirming the unbending resolve of the country to march onward to its goal of freedom, whatever the obstacles in the way and through whatever further struggles lay ahead of them. Pandit Nehru exhorted the Assembly to look upon the resolution as a solemn pledge to their people which they should redeem in the constitution they would frame. Appealing to those who should rightly be present in the Constituent Assembly, but who were not, to participate and help in the task that lay ahead of them, Pandit Nehru said that in working for the freedom of India, none should function as a party, but that everyone should be above his party or group.

Pandit Nehru also touched briefly on the contents of the resolution and said it had been pointed out to him that some people like the Princes and others in England might not like India to be a Republic. But that was the goal which the Indian people desired most to reach and India being a Republic did not in any way prejudice the Indian States continuing to remain as monarchies if that were the wish of the States' people. But monarchies in the States would have to be purely constitutional ones with the people enjoying complete democracy.

In moving the resolution, Pandit Nehru, speaking in Hindustani, said: "We are on the threshold of a new era. This resolution is a message defining our intentions as to what we propose to do. This is a contract with the millions of Indians in particular and the people of the world in general. This is in the nature of an oath that we mean to keep."

Pandit Nehru said that the Constituent Assembly had been meeting for some days and had so far been concerned with details of procedure and other formal business. "We have been clearing the path that we propose to follow, and clearing the ground where we propose to erect the edifice of a constitution.

"Before advancing we must know where we are going and what we intend building. In building, we must note with care each brick that we use. But before that, we must have a plan of the structure that we wish to erect. We have had various plans for a free India in our minds, but now it seems necessary to place that plan in a formal and orderly manner before the people of India and of the world."

It was the aim of the resolution that he was placing before the House to fulfil that need, Pandit Nehru continued. "You know that this Constituent Assembly is not what many of us would have wished it to be. It was born under special conditions and the British Government are also responsible for its birth. They have attached certain conditions to it. We accepted the plan after serious deliberation and we shall endeavour to remain within its limits. You must not, however, ignore the source from which this Assembly derives its strength. Governments are not formed by statements. Governments are, in fact, the expression of the will of the people. We have met here to-day because of the support of the people who are behind us. We can only go so far as they will allow us to and we must not forget these facts."

Speaking in English, Pandit Nehru said: "This resolution is not a part of the constitution that we are going to draw up and it must not be looked upon as such. This House has perfect freedom to draw up a constitution and when others join this House, they will have perfect freedom too to fashion out that constitution. This resolution steers in between two extremes—of saying too much and too little—and lays down only certain fundamentals which I believe no group, no party and hardly any individual in India can dispute."

"I wish to make it clear that so far as this resolution or declaration is concerned, it does not interfere in any way with any future work that this Constituent Assembly may do or with any future negotiations which it may undertake. Only in one sense, if you like, does it limit our work, if you call that a limitation. That is, we adhere to certain fundamental propositions which are laid down in this declaration and those fundamental propositions, I do submit, are not controversial in any real sense of the word. Nobody challenges them in India; nobody ought to challenge them. If anybody does challenge them, we accept that challenge and we hold to our position." (Cheers.)

Speaking with some bitterness about his recent vist to England and its outcome Pandit Nehru said: "I was reluctant to go, for reasons that the House knows well, but I went because of a personal request from the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I went and I met with courtesy everywhere and yet at this psychological moment in India's history, when we wanted, when we hungered, for messages of cheer, friendship and co-operation from all over the world, and more specially from England, because of the past contact and conflict between us, unfortunately, I came back without any message of cheer and with a large measure of disappointment. I hope that the new difficulties that have arisen—for new difficulties have arisen, as everyone knows, because of recent statement made by the British Cabinet and others in authority there—I hope these will not come our way and we shall yet succeed in going ahead with the co-operation of all of us here and those who have not come.

INDIA'S PASSION FOR FREEDOM

"Nevertheless, it has been a blow to me, it has hurt me, that just when we were going to strike ahead, obstructions were placed in our way, new limitations were mentioned which had not been mentioned previously, new methods of procedure were suggested. Now I do not wish to challenge the bonafides of any person but I do wish to say this, that whatever the legal aspect of a thing might be, there are moments when law is a feeble reed to rely upon, more specially when you have to deal with a nation which is full of the passion for freedom. Most of us here during these past many years, for a generation or more, have taken part in the struggle for India's freedom. We have gone through the valley of the shadow once before and if necessity arises, we shall go through it again. (Cheers). Nevertheless, through all this long period, we have thought of the time when we shall have an opportunity not merely to struggle, not merely to destroy but to construct and create. And now that it appeared that the time was coming for constructive effort in a Free India, we looked forward to it with joy. And when fresh difficulties are placed in our way at such a moment it hurts and it shows that whatever the forces behind all this may be, people, who are able and clever and very intelligent, somehow lack the imagination which should accompany great offices. For, if you have to deal with any people, you have to understand them imaginatively, emotionally and of course intellectually. And one of the unfortunate legacies of this past has been that there has been no imagination in the understanding of the Indian problem.

"People have often indulged in and presumed to give us advice not realising that India as she is constituted to-day, wants no one's advice and no one's imposition (Hear, hear) and that the only way to influence India is through friendship, co-operation and goodwill. Any element of imposition, the slightest trace of patronage, is recent and will be objected to (Cheers).

"We have tried honestly enough in the last few months in spite of difficulties that have faced us to create an atmosphere of co-operation. We shall continue that endeavour, but I do very much fear that that atmosphere will be impaired if there is not sufficient response from the others. Nevertheless, because we are bent on high tasks, I do trust that we shall continue that endeavour and I do hope that we shall succeed too.

"We must continue that endeavour, even though in our opinion some countrymen of ours take a wrong path for after all, we have to live together in this country, we have to work together and we have inevitably to co-operate, if not to-day, then tomorrow or the day after. Therefore we have to avoid in the present anything which may create a new difficulty for the fashioning of that future which we are working for.

"So far as our own countrymen are concerned, we must inevitably try our utmost to gain their co-operation in the largest measure. But co-operation cannot, does not and will not mean giving up of the fundamental ideals on which we have stood and on which the nation should stand (Hear, hear). Because that is not co-operation to achieve something, but a surrender of everything that has given meaning to our lives.

"Apart from that, as I said, we seek the co-operation of England, even at this stage, which is full of suspicion of each other. We feel that if that co-operation is denied, may be, that will be injurious to India certainly to some extent, but probably more so to England and to some extent to the world at large. We live to-day in a period when having just come out of a mighty war people talk vaguely and wildly of new wars to come. At such a moment this new India is taking birth, renascent, vital, fearless. Perhaps it was a suitable moment for this new birth to take place out of the turmoil of the world. But we have the clear-eye at this moment, we who have the heavy task of constitution-building. We have to think of the tremendous prospect of the present and the greater prospect of the future and not get lost in seeking small gains for this group or that.

"In this Constituent Assembly we are functioning on a world stage and the eyes of the world are upon us, the eyes of our entire past are upon us, and though the future is still unborn, the future too looks at us. I would, therefore, beg of this House to consider the resolution in this mighty prospect of our past, of the turmoil of the present and of this great unborn future that awaits us."

MONARCHY IN INDIAN STATES

Referring to Indian States, Pandit Nehru said: "Some people have pointed out to me that the mention of 'Republic' in the resolution may somewhat displease the Rulers of Indian States. It is possible that this word may displease them. But I want to make it clear that personally I do not believe in the monarchical system anywhere and that in the world to-day, monarchy is a fast-disappearing institution. Nevertheless it is not a question of my personal belief in this matter.

"In regard to the States our views have been for many years first of all, that the people of these States must share completely in the freedom to come. It is quite inconceivable to me that there must be different standards of or degrees of freedom as between the people in the States and the people outside the States. The States will be parts of the Union. That is a matter for this House to consider with representatives of the States and I hope in all matters relating to the States, this House will deal with real representatives of the States. We are perfectly willing, I take it, to deal in such matters as appertain to them with the Rulers or their representatives also, but finally when we make a constitution for India, it must be through the representatives of the people of the States as of the rest of India who are present here (Cheers).

"While we may lay down or agree that the measure of freedom must be the same in the States as elsewhere, personally I should like a measure of uniformity in regard to the apparatus and machinery of government; nevertheless, that is a point to be considered in co-operation and consultation with the States. I do not wish, I imagine this Constituent Assembly will not like to impose anything upon the States against their will. If the people of a particular State desire to have a certain form of administration, even though it might be monarchical, it is open to them to have it. The House will remember that even in the British Commonwealth of Nations to-day, Eire is a Republic and yet in many ways it is a member of the British Commonwealth. So it is a conceivable thing. What will happen, I do not know. But there is no incongruity or impossibility about a certain different form of administration in the States, provided there is complete freedom and responsible Government there and the people really are in charge. If monarchical figureheads are approved of by the people of a particular State, whether I like it or not, I certainly would not like to interfere."

Pandit Nehru began by saying that the Assembly had to pass its rules of procedure, to elect committees and the like before it could proceed to its real work—embarking upon the "high adventure of giving shape in the printed and written word to a nation's dream and aspiration." But even at this stage it was surely desirable that we should give some indication to ourselves, to those millions in this country who were looking up to us and the world at large, of what we aimed at, what we sought to achieve, whither we were going. "It is with this purpose that I have placed this resolution before the House. It is something much more than a resolution: it is declaration; it is a firm resolve; it is a pledge and an undertaking and it is for all of us, I hope, a dedication. I wish this House, if I may say so respectfully, to consider this resolution not in a spirit of narrow legal wording, but to look at the spirit behind the resolution. Words are magic things often enough but even the magic of words sometimes cannot convey the magic of the human spirit and of a nation's spirit and so I cannot say that this resolution at all conveys the passion that lies in the hearts and minds of the Indian people today.

"It seeks very feebly to tell the world what we have sought and dreamed of for so long and what we now hope to achieve in the near future. It is in that spirit that I venture to place this resolution before this House and it is in that spithat I trust the House will receive it and ultimately pass it. May I also, with all respect, suggest to you and to the House that when the time comes for the passing of this resolution that may not be done in the formal way of raising of hands but much more solemnly by all of us standing up and thus taking this pledge anew?

Muslim League's Absence

"The House knows that there are many absentees here: many members who have a right to come here have not come. We regret that, because we should have liked to associate with ourselves as many representatives of as many different parts of India and as many different groups as possible. We have undertaken a tremendous task and we seek the co-operation of all people in that task because the future of India that we have envisaged is not confined to any group, religious, provincial or other, but it comprises all the 400 million people of India and it is with deep regret that we find some benches empty, some colleagues, who might have been here, absent. I do hope that they will come and this House in its future stages will have the benefit of the co-operation of all.

"Meanwhile, there is a duty cast upon us and that is to bear the absentees in mind to remember always that we are here not to function for one party or one group, but always to think of India as a whole, always to think of the welfare of the 400 millions that comprise India. We are all in our respective spheres partymen belonging to this group or that and presumably we shall continue to act in our respective parties. Nevertheless, times come when we have to rise above party and think of the nation, think sometimes of even the world at large of which our nation is a great part. I think in the work of this Constituent Assembly the time has come when we should, in so for as we are capable of it, rise above all our little selves and party disputes and think of the great problem before us in the widest, most tolerant and the most effective manner so that whatever we may produce will be worthy of India as a whole and the world shall recognise that we have functioned as we should have functioned in this high adventure.

TRIBUTE TO GANDHIJI

"There is another person who is absent here and who must be in the minds of many of us, as he is in my mind as I stand here to-day, the great leader of our people, the father of our nation (cheers), who has been the architect of this Assembly and all that has gone before it and possibly of much that will follow. He is not here because in pursuit of his ideals he is ceaselessly working in a far corner of India. But I have no doubt that his spirit hovers over us and blesses our undertaking (more cheers).

"As I stand here, I feel the weight of all manner of things crowding around me. We are at the end of an era and possibly very soon we shall embark on a new age. My mind goes back to the great past of India to the 5,000 years of India's history, to the very dawn of human history. All this past exhilarates me and, at the same time, somewhat oppresses me. Am I worthy of that past? And then, I think also of the future, the greater future I hope and standing on this sword's edge of the present between this mighty past and the mightier future, I stumble a little and feel overwhelmed by this mighty task.

"We have come here at a strange moment in India's history. I do feel that there is some magic in this moment of transition from the old to the new, something of that magic that one sees when the night turns into day and even though the day may be a cloudy one it is a day after all, and the clouds roll away and we can see the sun later on. And because of all this, I find a little difficulty in addressing this House and putting all my ideas before it and I feel also that in this long succession of thousands of years I see the mighty figures that have come and gone and I see also that long succession of our colleagues and comrades who have laboured for the freedom of India and are now no more."

OTHER ASSEMBLIES RECALLED

Referring to the large number of amendments which had been tabled, Pandit Nehru urged that the House should not lose itself in wordy quarrels and squabbles. Pandit Nehru went on: "Because this is a Constituent Assembly, I think also of the various Constituent Assemblies that have gone before of what took place at the making of the great American nation, when the fathers of that nation met and fashioned out a constitution which has stood the test of these many years—more than a century and a half—and of the great nation which has been built up on the basis of that constitution. And my mind goes back to the mighty revolution which took place also over 150 years ago, and to that Constituent Assembly that met in that gracious and lovely city of Paris which has fought so many battles for freedom and the difficulties that that Constituent Assembly had; how the King and other authority came in its way and still it continued. The House will remember that when these difficulties came and even lodging and a place to meet were denied to that Constituent Assembly, they betook themselves to an open tennis court and met there and took the oath which is called the Oath of the Tennis Court. They continued to meet inspite of kings and in spite of others and did not disperse till they had finished the great task they had undertaken. I trust that it is in that solemn spirit that we too are met here and that we too whether we meet in this chamber or other chambers or in the fields or the maket place, shall go on meeting and continuing this work till we complete it (Loud cheers). And then the more recent revolution which gave rise to a new type of State, the revolution that took place in Russia and out of which has arisen the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—another mighty country which is playing a tremendous part in the world, and not only a mighty country but for us in India a neighbour country. And so our mind goes back to all these great examples and we seek to learn from their successes and to avoid their failures. Perhaps we may not be able to avoid all failures because some measure of failure is inherent in human effort. Nevertheless, we shall advance, I am certain, and inspite of obstruction and difficulty achieve and realise the dream that we have dreamt so long."

"FUTURE GOVT. MUST BE DEMOCRATIC"

Referring to the expression "independent sovereign Republic" in the resolution, Pandit Nehru said: "I will not go into the argument about monarchy and the rest, But obviously we cannot produce a monarchy for India out of nothing. It is not there. If it is to be an independent and sovereign State we are not going to have external monarchies. It must inevitably be a Republic."

Some friends had asked him why he had not put in the word "democratic." His reply was, "It is conceivable of course, that a Republic may not be democratic, but all our past is witness to the fact that we stand for democratic institutions. Obviously we are aiming at democracy and nothing less than democracy. What form of democracy, what shape it might take, is another matter. Democracies of the present day, many of them in Western Europe, and elsewhere have played a great part in the world's progress. Yet it may be doubtful if those democracies may not have to extend their content, change their shape somewhat before long, if they have to remain completely democratic.

"We are not going just to copy. I hope a certain democratic procedure or institution of so-called democratic countries. We may improve upon it. In any event whatever system of Government we may establish here must fit in with the temper of our people and be acceptable to them. We stand for democracy. It will be for this House to determine what shape we shall give to that democracy—the fullest democracy I hope. The House will notice that in this resolution, although we have not used the word 'democratic'—because we thought that it was obvious that a Republic contains that word and we did not want to use unnecessary and redundant word—we have done something much more than use the word We have given the content of democracy in this resolution, and not only the content of democracy, but the content, if I may say so, of economic democracy. Others may take objection to this resolution on the ground that we have not said that it should be a Socialist Republic. I stand for Socialism and I hope India will stand for Socialism and that India will go towards the constitution of a Socialist State and I do believe that the whole world will have to go that way. The form of Socialism again is another matter for your consideration. But the thing is that in such a resolution if in accordance with my own desire I do put in that we want a Socialist State, we put in something which may be agreeable to many and may not be agreeable to some and we wanted this resolution not to be controversial in regard to such matters. Therefore, we have laid down, not theoretical words and formulae, but rather the content of the thing we desire."

"We are going to make a constitution for India and it is obvious that what we are going to do in India will have a powerful effect on the rest of the world. Even to-day on the verge of freedom as we are India has begun to play an important part in world affairs. That part will grow and therefore, it is right that the framers of our constitution should always bear this larger international aspect too in mind. We approach the world in a friendly way. We want to make friends with all countries. We want to make friends, in spite of the long history of conflict in the past with England also."

MR. PURUSHOTTAM DAS TANDON'S APPEAL

Seconding the resolution, Babu *Purshottamdas Tandon* said : "To-day's session of the Constituent Assembly is a historical occasion. Such a meeting has been convened after much struggle and sacrifice on our part. It brings to our mind the assemblies held in ancient times in India under Asoka when the pandits met to discuss important affairs of the country. This Constituent Assembly will be remembered with those others which have met to frame the constitutions of other free nations. We have to live as part of the world and not in isolation."

The underlying theme of the resolution, Mr. Tandon continued, was equality. The different units of the country had been given autonomy and the resolution added that India should however, remain one with full sovereignty. There were amendments to the resolution asking for a postponement of its consideration until such time as the Muslim League came into the Assembly. He said that he too was one of those who wanted the League to co-operate with them in their work. But there was such a thing as a suitable occasion. There was no certainty as to when the League would come in and the Assembly could not disperse merely after having appointed a Procedure Committee. In that cast there would be no point in their coming together.

While he was opposed to any postponement of consideration of the resolution care should be taken and the fact had been taken to do nothing that would hurt the Muslim League. The resolution had stated that residuary powers should vest in the provinces. He personally was opposed to this, in view of recent disturbances, in Bengal and other areas, but he would not raise any objection for two reasons, first of all in order not to offend the League, and secondly because the Statement of May 16 which was the foundation of the Constituent Assembly said that the residuary powers should go to the Provinces.

Opposing the amendments that sought to add to or substitute certain passages in the text of the resolution, Mr. Tandon said that the resolution had been drawn up in terms as comprehensive as possible without making it too detailed or cumbersome. The substitution of "working people" for "people" made the resolution narrower for it was meant to apply to all the people and not to any particular section of them.

Referring to the latest speech of Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr. Tandon was sorry to say that though Sir Stafford professed to help India his real aim was to erect road blocks in the way of the Assembly. "Sir Stafford keeps harping on the theme of our differences forgetting that after all those differences are only a British creation. We have now to understand the British game. Those who at present are playing to their tune are our brothers and we certainly desire their co-operation but in order to have them on our side, we cannot sacrifice those basic principles to which we have been wedded till now and which go to make a nation."

Mr. Tandon had hoped that with the coming of the Labour party into power the British Government would reverse its previous policy of divide and rule but he was disappointed to see that some of the recent statements aimed only at creating a breach among the people of India.

He admitted that the Congress had come into the Assembly by accepting the Cabinet Mission's proposals but wanted to point out that Constituent Assemblies after meeting in one particular way may decide to adopt an altogether different course.

Dr. *Rajendra Prasad*, President, said that forty amendments had been received and that the time for the amendments was now passed. He then adjourned the House till Monday.

DR. JAYAKAR'S SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION

Forty amendments tabled to-day proposed drastic changes and even wholesale substitution of Pandit Nehru's resolution on the declaration of objectives to be discussed by the Constituent Assembly on Friday. One of the two substitute resolutions was in the name of Mr. *Somnath Lahiri*, the Communist member and ran to 1,500 words. Dr. *M. R. Jayakar* headed the list with the other substitute resolution which is a brief one and reads:

"This Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve that the constitution to be prepared by this Assembly for the future governance of India shall be for a free and democratic sovereign State; but with a view to securing, in the shaping of such a constitution, the co operation of the Muslim League and the Indian States, and thereby intensifying the firmness of this resolve, this Assembly postpones the further consideration of this question to a later date, to enable the representatives of these two bodies to participate, if they so choose, in the deliberations of this Assembly."

COMMUNIST AMENDMENT

Mr. *Lahiri's* substitute resolution declares India to be an independent country and calls upon the Indian members of the Interim Government, "who, as nominees of the two main popular parties and of the minorities, together enjoy the support of the overwhelming majority of our people, to act as the Free Provisional Government of India and to function henceforth in the name of the Indian people and not as hitherto in the name of the British King Emperor."

The resolution calls upon the Provisional Government to take steps *inter alia* to effect the withdrawal of all British troops from India and the withdrawal of Indian troops from outside India and take over all banks, industrial and transport concerns, plantations, mines, etc., owned by British capital and nationalise them. The Government is asked to pass legislation to enforce a minimum living wage, recognise trade unions and penalise defaulting capitalists. People are called upon to be vigilant and report acts of intransigence and sabotage carried out by bureaucrats and officials in the interest of their former master so that such cases are speedily exposed and the culprits punished.

In order to resolve Congress-League differences, the resolution suggests, first the setting up of a Boundary Commission to redemarcate existing provinces and States into linguistically and culturally homogeneous units, and second, plebiscite of the entire adult population of each such unit to determine whether they will join the Indian Union or form a separate State. The resolution asks for the establishment in Indian States of popular interim Governments which should call a

Constituent Assembly which in turn, should elect delegates to the All-India Constituent Assembly.

Smaller amendments include two by Mr. *Shibban Lal Saksena* (Leftist from U. P.), who opposes the vesting of residuary powers in the units and advocates a declaration that the power and authority of the State are derived from the working people.

Mr. *Ram Narayan Singh* asks for the addition of a clause to declare unlawful all formations or organisations of parties and cliques, open or secret, on the basis of any ideology, religion or otherwise, for election, administration or any other purpose.

Mr. *C. E. Gibbon*, Anglo-Indian member from the Punjab, demands freedom for propagation of religion.

Mr. *Satya Ranjan Bakshi* wants the safeguarding of liberty of person and immunity from arrest without warrant and detention without trial.

Mr. *Vishwambhar Dayal Tripati*, who sponsors more amendments than any other member, favours an explicit declaration that the Constituent Assembly is a sovereign constitution-making body deriving power from the people. He asks that India be proclaimed as an independent sovereign Socialist republic, as against the independent sovereign republic envisaged in the original resolution.

Sixth day—New Delhi—16th. December 1946

Dr. *M. R. Jayakar*, in the Assembly to-day, sought postponement of the "Declaration of Objectives" to a later date, so as to enable representatives of the Muslim League and of the Indian States to consider Pandit Nehru's resolution. Dr. Jayakar's resolution, moved in the form of an amendment to Pandit Nehru's resolution, stated :

"This Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve that the constitution to be prepared by this Assembly for the future governance of India shall be for a free and democratic sovereign State ; but with a view to securing, in the shaping of such a constitution, the co-operation of the Muslim League and the Indian States, and thereby intensifying the firmness of this resolve, this Assembly postpones the further consideration of this question to a later date, to enable the representatives of these two bodies to participate, if they so choose, in the deliberation of this Assembly."

Dr. Jayakar said that his purpose in moving his amendment was to save the work of the Assembly from frustration. He was anxious that the work of the Assembly should not be made infructuous by their neglecting one or two difficulties which lay in their way.

Dr. Jayakar contended that at this stage, in this preliminary meeting of the Constituent Assembly, no question like laying down the fundamentals of the constitution could be considered That the resolution was intended to lay down the fundamentals of the constitution even Pandit Nehru had admitted with his usual frankness. Even a cursory view of the resolution would reveal to them that a few things mentioned in the resolution were fundamentals of the constitution, for example, mention of a Republic, Union, present boundaries, residuary powers being derived from the people, minority rights, etc.

Within the limits of the Cabinet Mission's statement, the Assembly had no power to lay down any fundamentals, however sketchy they might be, of the constitution at this stage. That must wait till the stage at which the States and the Muslim League would be present.

"We are no doubt a sovereign body," said Dr. Jayakar, "but we are sovereign within the limitations of the paper by which we are created. We cannot go outside those limitations expect by agreement and the two parties (States and League) being absent, no agreement can be thought of. If the idea of some people is to ignore those limitations altogether, and turn this Constituent Assembly into a force for gaining political power, irrespective of the limitation of this paper to seize power and thereby create a revolution in the country, that is outside the present plan and I have nothing to say about it. But as the Congress has accepted this paper in its entirety, it is bound by the limitations of that paper."

Mr. *Kiran Shankar Roy* : This is a point of order and should be disposed of first.

President : He is not raising a point of order as far as I understand.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya : This is a motion for postponement of consideration of this subject and should be viewed as such.

President : I do not think it is a motion of adjournment either. He wants the resolution to be be discussed but he places before the House his own point of view with regard to the advisability or otherwise of considering it at this stage and in doing so he points out there are certain legal difficulties also in the way.

Mr. *K. Santanam* said that if Dr. Jayakar's argument was correct, the first sentence of his own resolution was out of order.

Dr. *Jayakar*: I have no objection, if that is the sense of the House, to deleting that part of my motion, if the remaining part is allowed to stand. Even if you treat it as a motion for adjournment, I can move it before other amendments are considered.

President: If Dr. Jayakar's legal argument is correct, then the resolution moved by Pandit Nehru is out of order and this point should have been raised at the time when the resolution was moved. At this stage I do not think that a point of order can be raised. Therefore, we have to take both the amendments and the resolution as being in order and proceed with the discussion.

The Indian States, said Dr. *Jayaker*, were absent for no fault of theirs, because in terms of the White Paper they could not be present at this stage. As regards the Muslim League the position was rather difficult and, he thought, very grave too The League had obtained three or four important concessions. He understood that the question of interpretation about Grouping and Sections was going to be referred to the Federal Court but it was clear that they could not go to the Federal Court on the last point made by the Muslim League, namely, that if a large section of people was not represented at the constitution-making body, His Majesty's Government would not be willing to force such a constitution upon unwilling parts of the country. It was a question of interpretation but an additional point which had been given to the Muslim League by way of addition to the Statement of May 16. "It is a substantive point, which has been conceded to the Muslim League contrary to what Mr. Attlee, Prime Minister, on March 15 this year in the House of Commons said in so many words that His Majesty's Government shall give all protection to minority rights, but no minority will be allowed to veto the progress of the majority."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel: May I know whether Dr. Jayakar is interpreting here the policy of His Majesty's Government? All these concessions which he is referring to are in addition to or over and above the White Paper statement. We have not accepted them and this House is not going to accept any additions,

Dr. *Jayakar* said that he was not asking Sardar Patel to accept any addition. He was pointing out the difficulties in the way. If Sardar Patel thought this was an addition which they ought to reject he (Dr. Jayakar) had heard nothing to that effect so far. If the Assembly proposed to do that, it was welcome to take that course but at present he was perfecly entitled to say that this was a point which the Muslim League had gained in addition to the May 16 document and this point raised a difficulty.

What would happen if a community like the Muslim community was not represented at the constitution-making? Sir Stafford Cripps had interpreted the phrase "unwilling parts of the country" to mean such parts of India where Muslim are in a majority. The effect of this interpretation would be that a constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly in the absence of the Muslim community would not be forced on those parts of the country. Whether any other community could take advantage of Sir Stafford Cripps' dictum, Dr. Jayakar did not know. That was a matter for interpretation. This particular addition had been hailed in England by certain sections. Mr. Churchill called it "an important milestone in the long journey." Whether this was an important milestone or a most dubious milestone, they were not concerned with, but the fact was that the Muslims had this right at the present moment.

If they chose to remain absent from the Assembly's deliberations, whatever the reason, whatever constitution the Assembly might frame in their absence could perhaps be binding upon Section A, but it was very doubtful whether it would bind Section B and C and the result would be that "if you accept the resolution to-day in the absence of the Muslim League and Indian States, that is not binding on the Muslim League at all." That raised the question whether it would not be wise, merely as a means of saving the Assembly's trouble and labour, to postpone the resolution to a future date. It was, to put it at the least, a saving of labour. But it was something more than that; there were points in the resolution in which the States and the Muslims were most intimately concerned. The resolution spoke of a Republic. He personally had no objection to that expression, but certainly the States were entitled to express their view.

If the Muslim League did not come in, the States would not come in. They had made it perfectly clear more than once and in the House of Commons debate it was stated clearly that the States would not deal with the Constituent Assembly if it was composed of one party only.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Palal: Dr. Jayakar is not representing the State here and no State representative has yet stated that if the League is not present, the States also will not be present.

Dr. *Jayakar*: I am not representing the States to you. I am stating what was stated in the House of Commons. Why can't I do that?

The probability was—and this was made clear in the Commons debate—that if the League did not come in, the States would not come in. The result might be that there would be another Constituent Assembly—as Mr. Jinnah wanted—for the purpose of framing a constitution for Sections B and C and a third constitution for the States. He did not want to express any opinion on whether the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab and the Hindus of Bengal and Assam could take advantage of the dictum (that the constitution would not be forced on unwilling parts of the country) which had now been interpreted only in reference to the Muslims. Instead of having one Hindustan, we may be forced to the necessity of having a Hindustan constitution, a mild or abbreviated qualified Pakistan constitution and a Rajastan constitution also. Your Union at the centre will go; it cannot be established."

At present there was provision for a Union Centre, even if it was an attenuated one and every effort ought to be made to retain it. He urged that Pandit Nehru's plea for continued endeavour to secure the co-operation of all should be translated into action. What was the harm in waiting for a few weeks until the Muslim League, by a formal resolution, declared its intention, he asked. "You are not meeting till January 20, I understand," he continued, "What is the harm in postponing the final vote on this resolution till then? Are the heavens going to fall? You are not going to do anything substantial until January 20. By that time the League should have taken its decision. It is not a question of doing anything which the Muslim League may object to; it is a question of giving them the right to be there during the deliberations, to save the work of this Constituent Assembly from being put into jeopardy, made infructuous. Supposing the Muslim League does not come in by January 20, do what you like. But why don't you wait for a little while and make it less difficult for the Muslim League to come in?

"Miles away from here is working that solitary figure whose steps we propose to follow, the great Mahatma. Alone, stinted in sleep, stinted in food, stinted in health, he is trying to win over the Muslim community by an extra dose of co-operation and goodwill. Why can't we follow his example here?" Dr. Jayakar asked. Dr. Jayakar said that if they passed the resolution at this stage, it would be "wrong, illegal, premature, disastrous and dangerous" and would lead them into trouble. Dr. Jayakar was cheered at the end of his speech.

SIR H. S. GOUR'S AMENDMENT

The Chairman, Dr. *Rajendra Prasad*, ruled out of order an amendment moved by *Sir Hari Singh Gour* to Dr. Jayakar's substitute resolution. Sir Hari Singh's amendment sought to delete from Dr. Jayakar's amendment the passage for a postponement of further consideration of the resolution to another date and expressed the opinion that the demand made by the Muslim League for Pakistan was suicidal and that it was in the interests of the Muslims and the minorities to institute joint electorates with reservation of seats for the next five years. It further laid down that no member of one community be deemed to be elected unless he polled a certain percentage of votes of the other community.

Sir Hari Singh argued that if Dr. Jayakar's amendment which sought to postpone further consideration of the resolution to an indeterminate period was in order then surely, his amendment, which really sought to amend the original resolution, was also in order.

Dr. *Rajendra Prasad* ruled that Sir Hari Singh Gour's amendment went beyond the scope of Dr. Jayakar's resolution and hence was out of order.

The *Chair* also ruled out of order Mr. *Somnath Lahiri's* (Communist) substitute resolution on the grounds, firstly, it directed the Assembly here and now to declare India a Republic, and secondly, it called upon the Interim Government to act in a particular way,

Mr. *Lahiri* submitted that Dr. Jayakar's substitute resolution, which wanted a postponement of the discussion was in fact a kind of action. If so, his substitute resolution also suggested a certain course of action and hence was in order. He recalled a ruling given by Dr. Rajendra Prasad as Congress President of the A. I. C. C. meeting when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved a resolution on India and the war and Mr. Lahiri was permitted to move an amendment suggesting a certain course of action to be taken.

Dr. *Rajendra Prasad* remarked that his ruling elsewhere could not be a precedent here.

Rai Bahadur *Syama Nandan Sahay* moved two amendments. The first asked *inter alia* for the establishment of an independent sovereign Republic of India "within the shortest possible time". By the second amendment Mr. Sahay wanted to delete the reference to States in respect of derivation of power and authority from the people. Mr. Sahay said that it had been argued by some Ministers in States that so far as the States were concerned power was derived from their respective sovereigns and not from the people. This was a matter on which there could be honest difference of opinion and it would not be proper for the Constituent Assembly to pass the resolution as it stood.

BIHAR PREMIER'S SUPPORT TO RESOLUTION

Mr. *Sri Krishna Sinha*, Premier of Bihar, supporting the original resolution moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, deplored that it was unfortunate that a resolution of such a sacred nature should have been subjected to amendments. "I purposely call it sacred," the Bihar Premier said, "because by that resolution an attempt is made to give expression to the aspiration to be free, which has moved this vast continent for so many years. It gives a picture of the vision of future India. After untold sufferings, sacrifice, resolutions and blood-baths, the principle had been established in many parts of the world that political power was derived from the people. And it was to establish and achieve this right that we in India had been fighting against British Imperialism."

Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha added: "I have been in a position from where I can form my own opinion as to whether there is any sincerity behind this talk of a peaceful transfer of power. We are assembled here to-day because we have succeeded in compelling those who still look up and still entertain the dream to govern India under the Act of 1935."

Referring to Dr. Jayakar's amendment, Sri Krishna Sinha thought that the House did not require a speech from Dr. Jayakar dealing with the difficulties. The Assembly knew the difficulties and if he understood Dr. Jayakar aright, he (Dr. Jayakar) did not give them a counsel of despair, but was ready to ask them to go ahead if their friends in the Muslim League was obdurate enough not to come. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had made it clear how anxious they were all to see the Muslim League occupy its rightful place in the Constituent Assembly. But he failed to understand how this particular resolution could stand in the way of the League coming to the Assembly at a future date. If they had understood the State Paper correctly, it was that the future of India was to be a united India and the future India might also decide to stay out of the British Commonwealth if the people so decided.

From the pronouncements made by Muslim League leaders, everybody could come to the conclusion that the League also stood for a free and independent India. In such an India power should rest with the people inhabiting this country. "Our task," Mr Sinha said, "is sacred and arduous. It is arduous not only because of the difficulties pointed out by Dr. Jayakar, but also because of the attitude of British statesmen. From my personal experience as an administrator, I do not feel encouraged in the belief that Britishers have made up their mind for a peaceful transfer of power to the people of India."

Mr. Sinha criticised Mr. Churchill's reference to Bihar riots in the Commons debate and said: "The Bihar Government did not hesitate for one single moment in using force and used whatever force it had. It gave protection to lakhs of Muslims in the Province."

"The Bihar Government is a proud Government," Mr. Sinha added. "It is not going to have dictations from the Government of India so long as it is constituted under the 1935 Act, even though that Government may have men like Pandit Nehru, who is our leader and a source of inspiration. I may tell Mr.

Churchill that during the fateful tour of the province, Pandit Nehru gave a bit of his mind to the people." In spite of the power he possessed, he (Mr. Sinha) would not have been able to save the lives of Muslims in the province but for the presence of Pandit Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and a vision of Mahatma Gandhi dying because Bihar had gone mad,

"I told the greatest official in this country," the Bihar Premier said, "that he could not have restored order in the short period in which the Congress Government in Bihar did it."

Concluding, Mr. Sinha said that in spite of the difficulties referred to by Dr. Jayakar, the Assembly must go on with the task set before it and make India independent. The Assembly then adjourned.

Seventh Day—New Delhi—17th December 1946

Mr. *M. R. Masani*, speaking as "an Indian first and last and as a "Democratic Socialist", supported the resolution to-day. "No nation", said Mr. Masani, "can tolerate the existence of perpetual or permanent minorities. Either that nation absorbs all the minorities or in the course of time, it breaks up. Therefore, while I welcome the clause in this resolution which promises adequate safeguards for the minorities, I would say that ultimately no legal safeguard can protect small minorities from the overwhelming domination of big masses unless on both sides an effort is made to get closer and become one corporate, homogeneous nation. That process has been shown to us in the United States, where peoples of different racial strains have come together and with one unfortunate exception have been absorbed in the common nation."

The resolution, in his view, clearly rejected the present social structure. There could be no other meaning to Clause V of the resolution, which referred to justice —social, economic and political. As he understood the resolution, it would not tolerate the gross inequalities which existed in our country; it would not tolerate the exploitation of the fruits of a man's labour by some body else. It certainly meant that every one who toiled for the common good would get his fair share of the fruits of his labour. "It also means that the people of this country will get, so far as the constitution can endow them with social security and the right to work or maintenance by the community. The resolution also provided for equality of opportunity. Equality of opportunity presupposes equal facilities for education, for the development of the talent, that is latent in each one of us."

It was fashionable in our times to argue that social or economic changes could not be brought about unless individual liberty and democracy were first destroyed. Pandit Nehru's resolution if he read it aright was a refutation of that thesis. It envisaged far-reaching social changes—social justice in the fullest sense—but at the same time, it worked for those changes through political democracy and individual liberty. The resolution pointed the direction to a constitution, where the people would be in the centre and the development of the individual personality would be the main aim of our social good.

Mr. *Frank Anthony*, the Anglo-Indian leader, supported Mr. Jayakar's amendment. He appreciated the solemn character of the main resolution, and he was not going to support the amendment arguing in its favour technical or legal reasons. He realised the fact that the first part of the main resolution affirming solemn resolve to proclaim an independent sovereign Republic was an article of faith with the Congress. It represented the supreme objective for which they had fought so long and so arduously and no one could or should and no one would dare to oppose them. From a constitutional point of view, Mr. Anthony thought that Dr. Jayakar's amendment and the original resolution in regard to the fundamental objectives of the constitution, namely, "it should be a free and democratic sovereign State" was identical. What Dr. Jayakar's amendment had asked them was to defer a declaration on the remaining parts of the main resolution in regard to Indian States, Provinces and its powers and functions. This, Mr. Anthony believed, was because the resolution might expose them to the charge, however baseless it was, that they prejudged matters on which decisions should be made after they had been fully canvassed and discussed in the Assembly. "I believe", Mr. Anthony said, "that this amendment ought to be adopted because it is dicated by humility and considerations of statesmanship and by the desire of every one of us to get the greatest measure of goodwill between two major parties to see the country of ours to be strengthened and free."

DR. MOOKHERJEE OPPOSES AMENDMENT

Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mookherjee*, opposing Dr. Jayakar's amendment, said its effect was that the Constituent Assembly could not pass Pandit Nehru's resolution until the Sections had met, if they ever met at all, and made their recommendations. Dr. Jayakar had maintained that this resolution could not be passed until both the States and the Muslim League were enabled to attend the Assembly.

As for the Indian States, Dr. Mookherjee said they could not come even if they wished to come until the Sections had met and settled the provincial constitution which would take many months. So far as the Muslim League was concerned, no doubt every one regretted it had not found it possible to attend the preliminary session of the Assembly and asked what guarantee was there that if this resolution was postponed till January 20, the Muslim League would come? Again, did this resolution raise issues which were inconsistent from the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16? The resolution, Dr. Mookherjee argued, would not prejudice the future constitution. When the time actually came for the framing of the constitution, it would be open to any member to bring up any matter before the House as an amendment to any particular proposal and such amendments were bound to be considered on their merits.

"If assurances are forthcoming", Dr. Mookherjee added, ".that this draft resolution does not go against the main features of the Cabinet Mission and also it does not commit the Constituent Assembly in regard to the details of the constitution that is yet to come, I see no reason why any obstacle should be put to the passing of this resolution. We are sitting here in our individual capacity and our sanction is not the British Government or Parliament, but the people af India. If that is so, we have to say something, not merely frame rules and regulations as to why we assembled here on December 9, 1946. If What Dr. Jayakar had said was the correct position, then this Constituent Assembly should not have been called at all and, in fact, Dr. Jayakar should not have attended the meeting. He should have informed the Governor-General: 'I feel I cannot attend, and I feel you are doing wrong in convening the Assembly when the League is not attending.' After having come here, for us to raise this issue is practically to walk into the trap of the Muslim League and strengthen the hands of the reactionaries in England. I know Dr. Jayakar is the last man to do any such thing; but we must also respectfully point out to him the great danger that lies in his innocent-looking amendment."

Dr. Jayakar had mentioned the analogy of a dinner party and asked if some of the guests did not come how could we have a dinner party? Dr. Mookherjee asked the counter-question: What will be the fate of the guests who have come?

Dr. Mookherjee went on to refer to Mr. Churchill's description of the Constituent Assembly as a marriage without the bride. Dr. Mookherjee asked how many brides were there in the Constituent Assembly? Were Indian States one bride and the Muslim League another? And if the League was the bride, was not Mr. Churchill playing the role of seducer instead of asking Mr. Jinnah to come to the Constituent Assembly? No one had said that the League should not came. "In fact, we want the League to come in now, so that we can meet face to face to solve difficulties, if there are difficulties and differences of opinion. We do not wish always to carry our decisions by a majority vote. That may have to be done in the last resort, but obviously every attempt must be made to come to an agreement. My charge is, the Muslim League is not coming because of the British attitude. The Muslim League is being encouraged to feel that if it did not come, it will be able to veto the final decision of the Assembly. The power of veto has in some form or other again passed into the hands of the Muslim League. That is the greatest danger that threatens the future activities of this great Assembly.

"Though it was a British creation yet once it came into existence the Assembly had the power, if it had the will to assert its rights and do what was best for the good of the people of India, irrespective of class or community. The Congress as one of the major parties had said that it stood by the Cabinet Mission's Scheme of May 16. "It gladdened my heart yesterday to hear Sardar Patel say that the Congress has not accepted anything beyond the Statement of May 16. That I consider to be an announcement of fundamental importance. (Cheers).

"We had to make clear what we were here for. We shall give the Cabinet Mission Scheme of May 16 a genuine and honest chance. We shall see if we can come to an agreement on the basis of that Scheme, but subsequent interpretations we are not going to accept.

"There has been considerable difference of opinion with regard to one Clause of the Statement of May 16, that is, with regard to the question of grouping. It is for the Congress to decide as one of the major parties, what interpretation it is going to accept. If the interpretation given by His Majesty's Government is not accepted and if the Congress considers the interpretation put by itself is correct then a crisis may come. That, however, is a question which has to be decided, apart from a discussion on this resolution. But the greater the delay in deciding that question, the greater will be the unreality of the proceedings of this House. After that question is decided, supposing H. M. G.'s interpretation is accepted, whether on reference to the Federal Court or not, we shall go on with our work. The Muslim League may come or may not come. Even if it does not come, we must proceed with the business of the Constituent Assembly."

Making a further reference to the crisis that he visualised, Dr. Mookherjee said that if India was to be free, it would be not by constitutional means, in view of the developments of the last few weeks. The agency should be the Constituent Assembly. "If ultimately we have to function, we shall function on our own responsibility and prepare a constitution which we shall be able to place before the bar of world opinion and demonstrate that we have treated the people of India, including the minorities, in a just and equitable manner.

"If we take courage and frame a constitution just and equitable to all, then we shall be able to declare this Constituent Assembly the first Parliament of the free sovereign and independent Indian Republic. able to form our own National Government and enforce our decision on the people of this land. Our sanction is not the British people or the British Government, our sanction is the people of India."

Talking about minorities, it had been suggested that the Muslim League represented the only minority in India. That was not so. The Hindu also constituted a minority in at least four Provinces in India. If minority rights had to be protected, such protection should be extended to every minority which might vary from Province to Province.

Dr. Mookherjee contested Lord Simon's statement yesterday that the Constituent Assembly consisted of Caste-Hindus. So many false statements had been made that it was difficult to count or counteract them. This was one. Actually in the Assembly were represented at least one Muslim Province, also the Province of Assam, which was supposed to be part and parcel of the Muslim majority area; the Scheduled Castes, including Dr. Ambedkar, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Parsis and Adibasis. Every element that had been elected to the Constituent Assembly was here, barring the Muslim League. The League might represent avery large section, but was it suggested that if this section of the Indian people chose to be absent from the Assembly, India was to continue to remain a slave country?

A voice: No.

Dr. Mookherjee, concluding, said that we should tell the British that in spite of all that had happened in the past, if they really wanted that we should remain friends in the future, we were prepared to accept their co-operation, but it was not for the British Government to interfere in the domestic problems of this country.

DR. AMBEDKAR ON PAKISTAN

Dr. *B. R. Ambedkar* was cheered as he rose to support Dr. Jayakar's amendment. He considered the first of Pandit Nehru's resolution to be controversial and the latter part, which set out the objectives of the future constitution, to be non-controversial. He, however, considered even the latter part to be pedantic, in that it enunciated only rights without prescribing remedies open to injured parties. He would like the constitution to say in most explicit terms that the State insisted upon nationalisation of industry and nationalisation of land.

As for the first part of the resolution, Dr. Ambedkar said that controversy seemed to have centred on the use of the word Republic. It also arose from the point made by Dr. Jayakar that in the absence of the League, it would not be proper for this Assembly to proceed with this resolution.

Dr. Ambedkar had not the slightest doubt about the future evolution of the social, political and economic structure of this country. "I know to-day", he said, "we are divided politically, socially and economically. We are in warring camps, and I am probably one of the leaders of a warring camp, but with all this I am convinced that given time and circumstances, nothing in the word will prevent this country from becoming one, and with all our castes and creeds, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that we shall in some form be a united people (cheers). I have no hesitation in saying that notwithstanding the agitation of the League for the partition of India, some day enough light will dawn upon Muslims themselves and they too will begin to think that a United India is better for everybody (cheers)."

So far as the ultimate goal was concerned Dr. Ambedkar said, none of them need have any apprehensions or doubt. Their difficulty was not about the ultimate thing but how to make the heterogeneous mass that they were to-day take a decision in common and march in a co-operative way on that road, which was bound to lead them to unity.

"I should have thought, therefore, that in order to make a start and in order to induce every party and every section in this country to co operate, it would be an act of the greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of the people who are not prepared to march together, and it is for that I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans which frighten people. Let us even make concession to the prejudices of our opponents. Bring them in, so that they may willingly join this march on that road which must necessarily lead us to unity." So it was from this point of view that he supported Dr. Jayakar's amendment. He wanted the House to leave aside the point whether the position it had taken up was in consonance with its legal rights or that it agreed with the State paper. This was too big a question to be reduced to legality. "Leave aside all these considerations," he said, "and make some attempt whereby those who are not prepared to come will come. Let us make it possible for them to come.

Asserting that the resolution would result in keeping the League out, Dr. Ambedkar said he would substantiate it by referring to Clause III in the resolution, which envisaged the character of the future constitution of India. He took it that the resolution, when passed, would act as a sort of directive to the Constituent Assembly in the framing of the constitution. The paragraph in question only dealt with autonomous Provinces and Indian States and the Union Government. There was no reference in it to the intermediary structure of Grouping. Reading the resolution in the light of the State Paper, or even in the light of the Congress Working Committee's resolution passed at Wardha, he must confess that he was surprised at the absence of any reference to the idea of Grouping.

"So far as I am personally concerned," Dr. Ambedkar went on to say, "I do not like Grouping. (Cheers). I like a strong unitary Centre; much stronger than the Centre created in the Act of 1935. (Cheers). But these wishes have no bearing on the situation at all. We have travelled a long road. The Congress party, for reasons best known to itself, consented to the dismantling of a strong Centre, which had grown into this country as a result of 150 years of administration and which to me was a matter of great admiration and respect. Having given up that position and having said that we do not want a strong Centre and having accepted that there must be or should be an intermediary or a Sub-Federation of Provinces, I should like to know why there was no reference in Paragraph 3 to the idea of Grouping. "I quite understand that the Congress, League and H.M.G. are not agreed on the interpretation on Grouping, but I always thought, and I am prepared to stand corrected, that the Congress agreed that if the Provinces consented to form a Sub-Federation, the Congress would have no objection to that proposal." How then was the idea of a Sub-Federation completely effaced from the resolution? Proceeding Dr. Ambedkar said he would not ask whether the House had the right to pass such a resolution. It might be it had the right. "The question I am asking is," he said, "is it prudent for you to do it? Is it wise for you to do it? Power is one thing and wisdom and prudence quite a different thing. I want this House to consider this matter from the point of view not of the authority as vested in this Constituent Assembly. I want the House to consider whether it would be statesmanship or prudence to pass this. Yet another attempt should be made to bring about a conciliation between the Congress and the League. This subject is so vital and so important that I am sure that it is not enough to decide it on the mere basis of the dignity of one or the other party. In deciding the destinies of a people, the dignity of the leaders or men or parties ought to count for nothing." There was only three ways by which the issue would be decided—surrender by one party to the wishes of the other, a negotiated peace and open war. He had been hearing from certain members of the Constituent Assembly the statement that they were prepared to go to war. "I must confess," said Dr. Ambedkar, "that I am appalled at the idea that anybody in this country should think of solving the political problems of this country by going to war. I do not know how any people support that idea. A good many perhaps do. And the reason why I think they do is that most of them believe that the war would be a war on the British. If the war that is in the minds of people can be localised and circumscribed, so that it will be no more than a war on the British people, I probably may not have much objection. But will it be a war on the British people? I want to place before this House in the clearest terms possible, that if any war comes in this country and that war has any relation to the issue with which we are confronted to-day, it will not be a war on the British. It will be a war on the Muslims, or, what is probably worse, a war on a combination of the British and the Muslims. I cannot have any other idea of the war that is being contemplated."

Quoting Burke's famous passage in favour of reconciliation with America, Dr. Ambedkar said: "If anybody has it in his mind that this problem can be solved by war or that the Muslims may be subjugated and made to surrender to a constitution that might be prepared without their knowledge and consent, this country would be involved in perpetually conquering them. As Burke said: 'It is easy to give power, but difficult to give wisdom. Let us prove by our conduct that we have not only the power but also the wisdom to carry with us all sections of the country and to make them march on that road which is bound to lead us to unity." (Cheers).

SIKH SUPPORT TO NEHRU'S RESOLUTION

Sardar Ujjal Singh, supporting Pandit Nehru's resolution, described it as "an expression of the pent-up emotions of the millions of this country." Opinions might differ with regard to the exact wording of the resolution, but taken as a whole it was an expression of the will of the people of this country.

Dr. Jayakar had urged postponement of consideration of the resolution till January 20, holding that the preliminary session was precluded from taking it into consideration. "My Honourable friend knows that when we meet on January 20, we will be meeting in a preliminary session all the same and his objection also holds good when we meet again on January 20" (hear, hear).

Sardar Ujjal Singh said that he was one of those who regretted very much the absence of the League from the House and he was also one of those who valued and sought the co-operation of the League. But it was not the fault of the House that those friends were absent to-day and it was not fair that its business should be postponed indefinitely without knowing when the other party was coming.

Referring to Dr Ambedkar's objection that the resolution did not mention Grouping, Sardar Ujjal Singh said: "Grouping is an optional matter and almost all of us, if I may say so, are against Grouping. Even the State Paper leaves it to the option of the Sections or as we interpret it, to the option of the Provinces." It was, therefore, not proper to mention Grouping in a resolution of this kind when the Sections or Provinces might decide otherwise.

"The Indian States might find some objection to the mention of a Republic, but any fears that they might have on that score was entirely unjustified in the light of Pandit Nehru's statement that the people of the States, if they so chose, could retain a monarchical system of Government in their own part of the country." Sardar Ujjal Singh dwelt at length on the Sikh attitude towards the Mission's plan, their original decision to boycott the Constituent Assembly and reversal of that decision following certain assurances given to the Sikhs by the Congress Working Committee. It was undoubtedly the height of injustice on the part of the Cabinet Mission not to have provided safeguards for the Sikhs in Section B similar to those provided for Muslims in the Union. The Sikhs, he contended, had a stronger case for safeguard in Section B than the Muslims had for safeguards in the Union. He also felt that any safeguards given to the Sikhs in Section B would be a guarantee of protection to other minorities in that area. He had great faith in the Congress leaders that the assurances given by them to the Sikhs would be implemented without delay.

Proceeding, he said: "Let us make it clear that the safeguards that the Sikhs demand in the Punjab and North-West are within the Indian Empire and not outside. They are anxious that all communities should live together in harmony and peace. They are prepared to live with their Muslim brothers in the Punjab and North-western India even treating them as elder brothers, but not as a superior or separate race or nation. The Sikhs, therefore, cannot tolerate the partition of this great and ancient land. (Cheers). They will stoutly oppose the establishment of Pakistan and all that it implies. The Sikhs have a burning passion for freedom. No single community in the history of India has struggled so long and so hard as the Sikhs have done to drive away foreign hordes. In recent times too their record of sacrifice in the country's battle for freedom is second to none. They will continue to march with the Congress in its fight for independence with unabated zeal and vigour (Hear, hear). They, however, want their separate entity and position maintained and strengthened, so that they may be able to contribute their full quota to the service of the country."

There were hurdles and obstacles in the way of the Assembly, but he *felt* certain that "we will be able to cross those hurdles and overcome those obstacles if we deliberate with caution, act with decision and, if need be, oppose with firmness."

Seth Govind Das, supporting the resolution, congratulated Dr. Ambedkar on his speech, but expressed astonishment at Dr. Jayakar's speech. "As far as the legal aspect of his amendments is concerned, I shall not attempt to comment, but I confess that I was surprised to hear Dr. Jayakar say that the resolution, if adopted, might render the work of the Constituent Assembly infructuous."

Seth Govind Das declared that the Congress and other freedom-loving elements in the country wanted real peace and not strife. Passive resistence and non-violence, he said, were two great contributions that Mahatma Gandhi had made towards the attainment of peace.

"We do not want to fight either the British Government or the Muslim League, but if the former were to employ the latter as tools for putting obstacles in the way of the country's freedom, we shall certainly oppose them. We want the League to participate in the Constituent Assembly, but if they choose to stay out we must go ahead. "If we are assured that the postponement until January of the resolution will guarantee the League's co-operation in the task of constitution-making, I am sure Pandit Nehru will not hesitate to withdraw it."

Referring to the resolution, he said that it sought to make India a Republic and that it was to be decided now whether that Republic would be of a socialist or of a democratic character. The British Government, he said, was incapable of stopping India's march towards freedom, howsoever they might try or wish, but he wanted to make it clear to the Muslim League that if it put obstacles in their way, then the Muslim League alone would be blamed by posterity.

Seth Govind Das concluded his remarks by calling upon the House to treat the resolution as a solemn pledge and act with firmness and independence.

Eighth Day—New Delhi—18th. December 1946

Rev. *J. J. M, Nichols Roy* (Assam), supporting the resolution, said that it was the desire of all the people of India that their future constitution should be a Democratic and Republican one. It was true there were some monarchies in India but it was hoped that a time would come when the monarchs here would become constitutional monarchs as in England.

Voicing Assam's opposition to Grouping, Rev. Nichols-Roy said that his Province was a non-muslim Province. The seven non-Muslim representatives of the Province in the Constituent Assembly were present while the three Muslim representatives were absent. In Section C, which was to draft the provincial constitution, there would be 36 Muslims and 34 non-Muslims. According to the latest interpretation of the State Paper by H. M. G., voting in the Sections was going to be by simple majority vote. "This will mean," he said, "that our constitution for Assam will be framed by the majority of the people of Bengal, that is, the Muslim League. We cannot consent to such an unjust thing."

People in Assam, he said, took it for granted that the Cabinet Mission would not be so unjust and unreasonable as to place Assam under Bengal. They understood that if a certain Province did not want to join a group, it would not be forced by a majority of votes of another Province to go into the Group. "I was very much gladdened by the declaration of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that the Congress has not up to the present time accepted the interpretation of H. M. G. It appears to me that the Cabinet Mission after they left India, had changed their mentality. Placed in different circumstances and influenced by the Conservative Party, the Mission has changed its opinion altogether," he said.

Rev. Nichols-Roy hoped that Assam had the full sympathy and support of the Constituent Assembly. He prayed that Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League would join the Constituent Assembly and co-operate in the task of framing the future constitution.

Rev. Nichols-Roy went on to say that he did not say any conflict would arise if the Congress proceeded to draft a fair and just constitution. Of course, it would be wrong to deviate from the four walls of the State Paper. "I believe," he said, "we can adopt a friendly attitude. We can say to the British: "Thank you, You have tried to bring Hindus and Muslims together. We shall, as far as possible, implement your recommendation but we will not carry out literally anything which is impracticable and unjust.' We shall frame out constitution and do justice to all minorities. We should be very happy if the Muslim League co-operates. The country will see what kind of constitution we have framed and the British Government will have an opportunity to see what we have done. Only then can they say that this Constituent Assembly has been just to a certain community." He pointed out how in Australia and in certain other Dominions some parts of the respective countries did not join the Union at first, but later joined.

Mr. *R. K. Sidhwa* said that he would also associate with the other speakers in the hope that the Muslim League would join the Constituent Assembly. But notwithstanding their absence and in the face of the threats given during the last four or five days in Parliament, Mr. Sidhwa said, the House must proceed with the business of framing a constitution. "They dare not refuse to implement it and if they do, we know how to implement it," he said. He asked the house not to tolerate "the mischievous propaganda that is being carried on to disturb our Constituent Assembly." Referring to Pakistan, Mr. Sidhwa said the question had been discussed and the Cabinet Mission had refused to entertain the demand. "Why is it then," he asked, "that Mr. Jinnah continues his mischievous and poisonous propaganda ? Instead of asking us to do something, the British Government must ask him to stop it."

Mr. *Biswnath Das*, supporting the resolution, said that there was hardly anyone in the country who could oppose it. Even Dr. Jayakar's amendment, he said, did not oppose the original resolution. He would, however, ask how a postponement of the passing of the resolution would affect the present situation. Mr. Das pleaded for a strong Centre. With the formation of linguistic Provinces, he said, there would be more small Provinces, and they could not rise to their full stature without the guidance of a strong Centre. The apprehensions that might be felt by the States over the mention of a Republic, he said, were unfounded. The whole position could be discussed between the Negotiating Committee to be appointed by the Constituent Assembly and the States Negotiating Committee.

Referring to the India debate in Parliament, Mr. Biswanath Das said that Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Churchill had become strange friends. He was surprised that an astute statesman like Mr. Jinnah should have fallen into the trap of the Conservatives. History revealed that the Conservative Party had made use of persons and institutions in dependent countries, and it should be easy for Mr. Jinnah to realise that he and the League had been made use of by the Conservatives.

Pandit *Hriday Nath Kunzru*, supporting Dr. Jayakar's amendment, said that the object of the amendment was not to obstruct, but to facilitate the work of the Assembly. Its purpose was to create an atmosphere which would enable us to realise rapidly and smoothly the great aim that we have set before ourselves.

Welcoming the report that the next session of the House would be held on January 20, Pandit Kunzru said : "I congratulate all those who are responsible for this decision. It is wise on our part to make every section of the people in and the people abroad realise that we do not want to impose our will on any party or community, but that such decisions as we have arrived at will be the result of joint discussion carried on with the sole object of enabling India to achieve her independence and to protect the just rights of the minorities and the backward classes.

The principal body whose work would be guided by the directives embodied in Pandit Nehru's resolution, Pandit Kunzru said, would be the Union Constituent Assembly, which would meet only after the Section Committees had done their work. It was obvious, therefore, that a postponement of the discussion on the resolution would not retard the work of the Assembly in the slightest measure. If the resolution was passed immediately, it would only be a unilateral decision.

The House would have ample opportunity of affirming the objectives outlined in the resolution. There need be no fear that any postponement of the resolution would mean the topedoeing of the purposes embodied in it. Indeed, he felt, "a slight delay will strengthen our hands in dealing with this important subject."

It had been supposed by a good many speakers, Pandit Kunzru said, if they admitted the right of the League and the States to participate in the discussion of the resolution, they would be giving them absolute power to block the work of the Assembly. "I think that this is a complete misapprehension of our position. Judging from the speeches delivered in the House of Commons and the House of

Lords by the spokesmen of the British Government, all that the British Government desire is that there should be agreement with regard to the procedure to be followed regarding the formation of the provincial constitutions and groups.

Continuing the Pandit said : '.The interpretation of Paragraph 19 of the Statement of May 16 is the only point at issue. I understand that the matter will soon be referred to the Federal Court. I hope, therefore, that the way will soon be open for the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly. If however, this is not the only ground on which it has abstained from attending the Assembly and even after agreement has been arrived at with regard to the procedure to be followed in the Section Committees, the Muslim League representatives refuse to come here, I do not think that they will be entitled to ask that the proceedings of this Assembly should be adjourned *sine die*."

The House, said Pandit Kunzru, could not allow itself to be frustrated by the intransigence of one party. "We are prepared to take into account all that is reasonable, but we cannot agree, in any circumstance, to allow it to decide the fate of this Assembly. Should such a situation unfortunately present itself, we shall be entitled to remind the British Government of Mr. Attlee's promise that no minority would be allowed to veto the decision of the country. The Secretary of State for India has himself reiterated this promise."

Referring to Grouping, Pandit Kunzru said that he personally saw no reason why any Province should be compelled to enter a Group. He saw, in particular, no justification whatever for compelling Assam to form a common Government with Bengal for any purpose. "What has happened in Noakhali and the deplorable events it provoked in Bihar have justifiably increased the apprehensions of the people of Assam. But Grouping, as the Cabinet Mission began pointing out almost from the very day on which the statement was issued, is an essential feature of their plan. We shall be able to deal with the position of the Provinces which are compelled against their wish to become members of a group later on when the reports of the Section Committees are before us. But let me repeat that the insistence of the British Government on bringing unwilling Provinces into Groups is morally completely unjustified."

Pandit Kunzru concluded : "We may be completely justified in passing Pandit Nehru's resolution, but of what use will it be for us to exercise our rights if it only adds to that discontent and unrest which it is our desire to allay : I hope, therefore, that we shall act in such a way that India may, with the assent of all sections of the people and if that unfortunately is not forthcoming, with the assent of all those who accept the right of the country to go forward, be able to march rapidly towards the goal that we have set before ourselves namely, freedom and unity."

SIR N. G. IYENGAR OPPOSES POSTPONEMENT

Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyenger, supporting Pandit Nehru's resolution, strongly urged that the resolution be pushed to its conclusion at this sitting (Cheers). He considered that the motion for adjournment lacked imagination. "I say it lacks imagination because it forgets that we have just launched ourselves on a very big task, and it is necessary that we should impress on our country and the world that we mean business. This resolution sets out the objectives that we have to place before ourselves in framing our constitution. Is such a resolution to be postponed till we reach the last stage of our work in this Assembly ? It is not a resolution which must preface everything substantial that we propose to do in this Assembly ? That I think is a complete answer to this motion for adjournment."

"The resolution", he went on, set out nothing to which either Dr. Jayakar or Pandit Kunzru were prepared to take exception. The League's main objection to what we were doing to-day arose from the different interpretation they had put upon the clause relating to Grouping. We were not discussing Grouping now. What then prevented the League from taking part in the discussion of other subjects ?

"Lord Pethick-Lawrence", Sir Gopalaswami Iyengar continued, "had clinched the matter yesterday by saying that H. M. G. would not budge from their position even if we appealed to the Federal Court. Of course, it is not within the jurisdiction of H. M. G. in my opinion, to say whether they would accept the Federal Court's view or not, because it is entirely out of their hands.

"The Constituent Assembly makes the reference to the Federal Court and it is for the Constituent Assembly to say before it makes the reference that it will able by the decision of the Federal Court. Assuming that the Federal Court's position is in favour of the view taken by H. M. G., what will be the position of those who have taken a contrary view ? The only thing they can do in view of the commitments they have made to individual Provinces and communities is to move this Assembly for modification of Paragraph 19 which would more clearly express their view. The main difficulty is the method of voting in the Sections, as the Secretary of State said in the House of Lords. If you leave Paragraph 19 (5) as it is, it is certainly an arguable point that in the absence of any modification of the words of that clause the voting must be by individuals and a simple majority should decide the question. If we want that voting should be by Provinces, it is necessary that we should propose a modification of that clause and that modification can, I think, be done by this Assembly on a motion properly moved. Are we going to do that?

"I suggest that in view of what has come from H. M. G., both in the Statement of December 6 and the speeches in the two Houses of Parliament, and in the new circumstances that have been created, the wiser thing to do is not to send a reference to the Federal Court, but to take other course which I have indicated, namely, that you bring up a resolution in this Constituent Assembly, proposing a modification of Clause 19 (5) which will provide that the method of voting should be by Provinces in the Sections so far as the Grouping matter is concerned.

"It is quite possible—and I think it will be an arguable position—for the Muslim League to come here and raise the question that such a modification involves a major communal issue. If you (Chairman) decide it as a major issue or if, after obtaining the advice of the Federal Court you decide that it involves a major communal issue, it would be open to the Muslim League to contend that you cannot carry out that modification without a majority in each of the major communities. "Why I ask, should we not take that step? We shall take that resolution into consideration at an adjourned sitting of this Assembly, say in January, and properly notify all the members of the Assembly,—even those who have not presented their credentials and signed the register, namely, the members of the Muslim League—that we shall move a resolution of that sort. That must be sufficient invitation to them to come and occupy their places in this Assembly and defeat what they may consider to be an unconscionable suggestion from the other side. Going to the Federal Court is absolutely useless and, so far as I can see, it will solve none of our troubles."

Referring to Dr. Jayakar's argument that the preliminary meeting of the Constituent Assembly could not discuss the resolution, he said that we were not like members of a Provincial or Central Legislature working under a statute of Parliament. We are in a Constituent Assembly and whatever is not said in the document under which we have gathered here is not prohibited to us. We have the residuary power in full for accomplishing the tasks which we have undertaken (hear, hear). That being so I would suggest that we should not rivet our eyes to particular clauses in this document and say that this is not said in this or that clause. I think whatever is not said but is necessary for the accomplishment of our task is within our powers to regulate."

Sir Gopalaswami Iyengar replied at length to the objection raised on behalf of Indian States to the inclusion of Indian States in the declaration in the resolution that all power and authority are derived from the people. He quoted from the report of two authoritative Committees set up in Mysore and Hyderabad and went on to say that the views of these two Committees as to where sovereignty rested in Indian States tallied. The Cabinet Mission stated that on the conclusion of the labours of the Constituent Assembly and the framing of a constitution for India, H.M.G. would recommend to Parliament such action as may be necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the Indian people.

The act of ceding sovereignty, that is transferring the power that Britain now wields in this country, would therefore, relate to the whole of India. When the Cabinet Mission, therefore, spoke of cession to the people of India, they must be held to have included the people of Indian States also, (Hear, hear). The Mission's statement, therefore, that when the British power was withdrawn, the States would become independent should be construed to mean that such sovereignty as His Majesty in fact exercised over the Indian States would stand ceded back to the people of Indian States.

The resolution now under consideration put the Indian States on the same level in regard to the subjects not ceded by them to the Union Centre as the Provinces were in respect of Provincial subjects, that is to say, it asserted that all powers and authority of Indian States as constituent parts of the sovereign independent India were derived as much from the people of the States as similar power and authority were in the Provinces derived from the people of the Provinces. It would be extremely anomalous if the constituent power in Indian States was vested in respect of Union subjects in the people of the States and in respect of Unit subjects in the rulers of the States. In the process of building up the new Federal structure of India through the Constituent Assembly, it would be found necessary that the written constitution of such States as already had them deserved to be overhauled as in the case of the Provinces and that written constitutions should be newly framed for States which did not have them.

It was possible to defer this work and leave it over for subsequent accomplishment, provision being made in the constitution prescribing the steps to be taken and the procedure to be followed in this connection. If the representatives of the States in the Constituent Assembly so desire, the Union constitution should guarantee the territorial integrity of the States as they existed to-day, subject to any modifications of boundaries which might be effected later on according to prescribed procedure and with the consent of the people of the States and the other area affected. The Constitution of a State, which would be settled by the people of the States in association with the ruler, might make provision for hereditary succession to the headship of the States of the dynasty which was in possession now in the State and the Union Constitution might contain a provision that if the States constitution did so, it would not be interfered with though a stipulation would be necessary that in the overhaul of an existing written constitution or in the framing of a new one in any particular State, the hereditary head of it should in the quickest possible time in the future become a constitutional monarch presiding over an executive responsible to a legislature the members of which were democratically elected.

The existing written constitutions of certain individual States almost invariably contained a section that all rights, authority and jurisdiction which appertained or were incidental to the Government of the territories included in the States were vested in and exercisable by the ruler, subject to the provisions of the constitution which was granted by the fiat of the ruler himself. These provisions in the State constitution were remnants of an all-pervasive autocracy and deserved to be swept away and replaced by a provision which declared that all powers of Government—legislative, executive and judicial—should be deemed to be derived from the people and exercised by such organs of State, including the hereditary ruler, as might be designated in the written constitution and to the extent authorised by that constitution. All this, in his view, emphasised the need for inclusion of Indian States in clause four of the resolution.

In fact, until we got into the Assembly representatives of the people of the States they could not really participate in the work of the Assembly and help in the making of constitutions for their own States as well as in the making of Union Constitution. (Cheers).

Ninth Day—New Delhi—19th December 1946

When the debate on Pandit Nehru's resolution was resumed to-day, *Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar* supporting the resolution and opposing Dr. Jayakar's amendment said that neither the Muslim League nor the Indian States would have a place in the Constituent Assembly unless they subscribed to the principle of a single Indian Union in the terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement. Sir Alladi said it was inconceivable that any constitution could be framed without a directing objective, and the resolution before the House formulated such a directing objective. In doing so, it followed the practice of other Constituent Assemblies.

Referring to the objection as regards derivation of authority, Sir Alladi asked: 'It is suggested that in respect of a sovereign Independent India, the authority of the Provincial parts is derived from the people and so far as the States are concerned from the hereditary Rulers of the States? "The constitution of a sovereign Independent India is the concrete expression of the will of the people of India as a whole, conceived of as an organic entity, and even in regard to the units themselves, the authority of the Rulers can rest ultimately only on the will of the people concerned. The State machinery, be it monarchy or democracy, ultimately derives its sanction from the will of the people concerned. The divine right of kings is not a legal or political creed in any part of the world at the present day. I do not believe it will be possible for hereditary monarchs to maintain their authority on such a mediaeval or archaic creed. The Cabinet Mission was quite alive to this and in their Statement, reference is made throughout to Indians, including both those of the Indian States and of British India, deciding the future constitution of India, no distinction being drawn between Indians in what is now British tract and what is now native State territory.

As regards Dr. Ambedkar's objection on the ground of omission to mention groups, Sir Alladi said that a close examination of the Cabinet Mission's Statement would point to the conclusion that the formation of groups was not an essential part of the constitutional structure. "In the most material parts, the main recommendations are that there should be a Union of India dealing with certain subjects, that all subjects other than the Union subjects and residuary powers should vest in the provinces and in the States, the States being assimilated to the position of the provinces under the Cabinet Mission's scheme. There is nothing in the terms of the resolution to prevent provinces from forming themselves into groups as contemplated by the Cabinet Mission."

COMMUNIST MEMBER INTERRUPTED

The debate opened with a speech by Mr. *Somnath Lahiri* (Communist) who speaking amid hostile interruptions, said he did not want the Princes to come into the Constituent Assembly and distort the picture of future India. He expressed doubt whether even if the Muslim League came in, the Assembly would be able to solve its difficulties. "We have before us the example of the Interim Government. Both the League and the Congress are present there, but that has not solved our internal difficulties. It has brought neither peace nor freedom. So, whether the Congress is in or out, or both the Congress and the League are in, quarrels in the country will be intensified. I am not sorry that the League has not come in. I am only sorry that the Congress has not gone out and left the British Government to stew in its own juice."

Mrs. *Hansa Mehta* welcomed the resolution for the great promise it held for women. "It will warm the heart of many women to know that free India will mean not only equality of status but equality of opportunity. We have never asked for reserved seats, quotas or separate electorates. What we have asked for is social, political and economic justice. We have asked for that equality which can alone be the basis of the mutual respect and understanding and without which real co-operation is not possible between man and woman. Woman form half the population of the country and man cannot go far without the co-operation of women and this ancient land will not and cannot attain its rightful and honoured place in the world without the co-operation of women. I, therefore, welcome the resolution for the great promise it holds and that the object embodied in it will not remain on paper but be translated into reality." (Cheers.)

BENGAL SCHEDULED CASTES OPPOSE GROUPING

Mr. *P. R. Thakore*, Scheduled Caste representative from Bengal, said that though Scheduled Castes numbering 60 millions were part and parcel of the Hindu community, they considered themselves a minority which was a separate political entity and they wanted special safeguards. They wanted representation on the basis of population in the legislatures. They did not claim any weightage but if weightage was agreed to for others, they demanded proportional weightage for themselves.

In the disturbances in Bengal, he said, it was the Depressed Classes who were the worst sufferers. They repudiated the claim of the Muslim League to take Bengal into Pakistan. They would oppose Grouping tooth and nail. He went on to say that efforts were being made by the Muslim League in Bengal to foist on the Depressed Classes new leaders who would help the League's plans. No power on earth could prevent India being free, he declared, and the Depressed Classes were ready for any sacrifice for freedom.

Mr. *Jaipal Singh*, representative of the Adibasis in Bihar, said that he was supporting the resolution on behalf of thirty million tribal people. His support to the resolution, he said, was not because it was sponsored by the Indian National Congress but because the sentiments expressed in it were those that throbbed in every human heart in this country.

GURKHAS STAND FOR UNITED INDIA

Mr. *Dambar Singh Gurung*, on behalf of the Gurkhas in the country, supported the resolution. It was high time that the House took a strong course insted of embarking on a policy of wait and see, which would never lead them to their goal. He denied that the Gurkhas were a stumbling block to the freedom of India. Though small in number, they were hardly three million in India and twelve million in Nepal, they had distinguished themselves in two wars. With their military tradition, they had in the past shed their blood for the maintenance of British Raj, but now free India would also need them and they would be ready to shed their blood for the protection of the constitution of Free India.

Sir *Hari Singh Gour*, supporting Pandit Nehru's resolution, said that the Constituent Assembly had been rightly described as a sovereign body. It was the voice of the people of India and was not a creature of the British Cabinet Mission. "When that voice became strong, the British Cabinet yielded to the demand for the constitution of this Assembly. Therefore let us not dismiss from our minds, that while we pay due respect to the wishes of the Cabinet Mission we are not bound by conditions that they may have laid down. Our primary and sole duty is to discharge our responsibility to our master, the people of India." Referring to the plea for postponement of discussion on the resolution on the ground that the Muslim League members were absent, Sir Hari Singh said that the Constituent Assembly would lose its prestige and destiny, if it went about hankering after the support of the League. "If we owe a duty to the public of India," he said, "that duty must and shall be performed, regardless of whether Mr. Jinnah or Pandit Nehru or anybody else comes in or goes out." To run after them and catch them by their coat-tails, and say: 'Please do not run away', would be undignified. "No constituent body, much less the constituent body of Aryavartha, shall demean itself into this position of humiliation and self-negation." Sir Hari Singh urged that there should be joint electorates. "Let the Muslims get their quota of seats but let there be a provision that no member of one community shall be deemed to have been duly elected unless he polls a certain percentage of votes of the other community. In this way we shall have introduced democratic and territorial elections and the acerbity of differences will begin to disappear in course of time."

Referring to the States, he said, "They say they have their treaties with the Crown dating back to 100 or 150 years. But what was the Crown of England 100 or 150 years ago? It was the voice of the British Cabinet and consequently, when they speak of their having had treaties with the Crown, what they do mean is that they have had treaties with the Government of England for the time being in power. It is an ordinary platitude, if I may say so, that if the Crown of England accepted the advice of the British Cabinet 100 or 150 years ago, is it wrong for the Crown of England to-day to act on the advice of the Indian Cabinet? Can the Indian Princes say that the Crown has no right to change its advisers? When they speak of their treaties with the Crown their position is, therefore, a futile one.

"Then they say that the Crown has the right of paramountcy. But they forget that the British Government in India has got the right of protecting all the Indian States—from the State of Hyderabad to the smallest State in Kathiawad—and he who has the right of protection enjoys *de facto* the right of paramountcy. The defence of British India having been transferred to the Interim Government, the latter became responsible for the security of the Indian princes and consequently that right of paramountcy has passed from the King of England or the Parliament of England to the Interim Government.

"Even assuming that there was a figurative continuance of paramountcy in the King, it was pointed out in the course of the debate in Parliament that when the transfer of power to India takes place paramountcy will lapse and consequently Indian States must either join hands with the Interim Government in India or remain isolated and aloof as a subordinate creature of free India. Therefore, I advise my friends of the Indian States that they are waiting in vain for an invitation from the Constituent Assembly to come in. If they wish to come in, they are welcome to do so." In framing the future constitution of India the Constituent Assembly should not cast its eyes on what the League would do or what the British Government would think, or refer its decision to the Federal Court. "I do not wish to anticipate the decision of the House on the subject of reference to the Federal Court but I do wish to repeat once more that this House should be sufficiently self-respecting to carry out its duties regardless of the opposition it may meet and the criticism it may arouse, from whatever sources they might come." (hear, hear).

MRS. VELAYUDAM'S APPEAL TO DR. AMBEDKAR

Srimati Dakshayani Velayudam (Harijan representative) said that the emancipation of the Harijans lay in the national forces which were represented in the Assembly. She hoped that in the Independent India of the future, Harijans would have their honourable place like other citizens (cheers). In the Indian Republic there would be no barriers based on caste or community. "I visualise that the underdogs will be the rulers of the Indian Republic. I therefore, appeal to Harijan delegates that they should not harp on separatism. They should not make themselves the laughing stock of future generations. Communalism, whether Harijan, Christian, Muslim or Sikh, is opposed to nationalism (hear. hear). The other day Mr. Churchill was very eloquent over the Harijans and said that the British Government is responsible for the lives of the so-called scheduled castes of India. But what has the British Government done to improve the social status of the Harijans? Did they ever pass any legislation to remove the social disabilities of the Harijans? Mr. Churchill may give protection to a few communalists who may fly to England but he must understand that Harijans are Indians and they have to live in India as Indians. What we want is the removal of the social disabilities. Only an independent Socialist India, not the British Government, can give freedom and equality of status to Harijans."

Some of the members of the Negotiating Committee, representing the Chamber of Princes, had objected to the statement in the resolution that power was derived from the people. But the historic message from the Cochin Maharaja to the people of Cochin State, "the most advanced State in India, to which I am proud to say I belong (cheers)," justified that statement. The Maharaja said in that message, "I believe in pure constitutional rule and throughout my life I have sedulously cultivated an attitude towards life and institutions which is antipathetic to autocracy and personal rule." It was obvious from this message that power was derived from the people. The House at this stage adjourned till the 21st.

Tenth day—New Delhi—21st December 1946

Representation for States

The Constituent Assembly to day adopted without division a resolution moved by Mr. *K. M. Munshi*, as amended by *Diwan Chamanlal*, setting up a committee consisting of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Dr. Sitaramayya, Sri Shankar Rao Deo and Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and three others, to be elected later, to confer with the Negotiating Committee of the Princes Chamber on the distribution and the method of return to the Constituent Assembly of 93 representatives of the Indian States.

Two amendments by Mr. *K. Santhnam* and Mr. *Somnath Lahiri* sought to make it clear that the results of the committee's work must be laid before the House for final ratification and that the committee should not possess powers to take final decisions. This was conceded by Diwan Chamanlal's amendment.

Another amendment that sought to include in the committee a Scheduled Caste representative was withdrawn. A fourth amendment, moved by Mr. Lahiri that sought to lay down that States' representatives must be States' people democratically elected, was also withdrawn after Mr. Nehru's assurance that the Constituent Assembly's Negotiating Committee had only the limited objective before it of negotiating over the method of the States' representation and that its negotiations would be finally placed before the Constituent Assembly.

Mr. *K. M. Munshi* then placed before the House the draft rules of procedure as evolved by the Rules Committee. The Chairman decided that the House should go on sitting this afternoon, the whole of to-morrow and the day after, to pass the rules and he invited amendments by to-morrow morning. The House, this afternoon, turned itself into a committee and proceedings were *in camera*.

MR. SANTHANAM'S AMENDMENT

Mr. K. Santhanam moved an amendment, the effect of which, he explained, would be to make it clear that the House should not delegate to any committee whatsoever the final recommendation on any matter. He wanted acceptance of the principle that "this House is the final determining body with regard to every committee we appoint and every other matter of procedure."

Mr. *B. G. Kher* said that for the limited purpose before the Committee, it was not necessary to bring in the principle of communal representation. The members now chosen had shown their interest not only in the welfare of the people of British India but also of Indian India. Requesting Mr. Santhanam to withdraw his amendment, Mr. Kher said that the wording of the resolution made it clear that the result of the negotiations would come up before the Assembly for final assent.

Pandit Jawharlat Nehru said that Mr. Munshi's resolution had a very definite limited object, namely, fixing of the method of representation in the Assembly for the representatives of the States. Obviously, there were innumerable problems in the States. The States had all the problems that we had in the rest of India plus other problems. Mr. Lahiri had mentioned one or two States where there was trouble. The Committee would have nothing to do with the internal structure of the States. That matter would be considered, he hoped, when the States' representatives came to the Assembly. The amendments urging representation for Depressed Classes or Adibasis seemed to ignore the fact that they were only considering a limited problem. The Depressed Class had their particular interest to be protected but that question did not come up before the Committee.

"I regret, I say frankly, that we have to meet the Rulers' Negotiating Committee," Pandit Nehru said. "I think that on the part of the States there should have been on the Negotiating Committee representatives of the people of the States. I think even now that the Negotiating Committee, if it wants to do the right thing, should include some such representatives but I feel that we cannot insist upon this at this stage. We want to get appropriate representation for the States in this Assembly—elected representatives as far as possible. We should insist upon that when the time comes but we cannot refuse to meet anybody. Therefore, in this resolution, we have said not only that we shall meet the Negotiating Committee set up by the Chamber of Princes but also other representatives of the States. That gives us scope to meet other people.

Referring to "mechanical difficulties" in providing representation for the States, Pandit Nehrn said that a State like Hyderabad would get a fair number of representatives on the basis of population. Some of the big States might get two or three or four but others would get barely one. Most of the others would not even get one unless they were grouped together or some other method was devised. No doubt the problems would come up at a later stage before the House, when, he hoped, States' representatives would also be present.

Pandit Nehru had no doubt, in his mind, that the final decision on such matters as those to be dealt with by the Committee should rest with the House. But he drew attention to the fact that usally a country did not reject an agreement arrived at by its plenipotentiaries: unless some vital principle had been broken, because a third party was concerned.

Dr. *Punjab Rao Deshmukh* urged that the hands of the Committee should be entirely free. In spite of the feeling in the House that the representatives of the people alone were entitled to speak on behalf of the States, it was necessary that the issue should not be prejudiced at this stage. It should be left to the Committee to determine what was in the best interests of the people of India as a whole as well as the States' people and then, if the House wanted to comment on those recommendations or decisions, there would be ample opportunity to do so.

Diwan Chamanlal moved an amendment asking the Committee to report to the Constituent Assembly the result of the negotiations with the States' Negotiating Committee. He said it was necessary that the conclusions of the Negotiating Committee should be brought before the House in order that it might be fully seized of the subject.

Mr. *K. M. Munshi* assured the House that whatever decision the Committee might arrive at would be placed before the House and there was no reason to fear that the Committee would decide upon something which the House would disapprove. He had no hesitation in accepting Diwan Chamanlal's amendment and requested the mover of the other amendments to withdraw theirs.

Other amendments were withdrawn and the Assembly passed the resolution, with Diwan Chamanlal's amendment.

Before the House took up consideration of the report of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, Dr. *Rajendra Prasad* announced that further discussion on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's resolution on the declaration of objectives would remain suspended till the House met again after the adoption of the Procedure Committee's report and the election of certain committees.

Procedure Committee's Report

Mr. *K. M. Munshi*, moving consideration of the Procedure Committee's report, asked that in order to secure informality of discussion and dispatch, the House do go into Committee and its proceedings be held in camera. He said that the Rules Committee had to work under great pressure because it was highly essential that before the Assembly dispersed the rules were adopted and the organisation of the Constituent Assembly was functioning. The members of the Committee had devoted care and attention to every aspect of the rules and it had the assistance of distinguished jurists like Sir B. N. Rau and others, at its disposal. Nevertheless there might be defects, inaccuracies and omissions of certain points of view but they were rules which could be altered and amended by the House.

Giving a broad outline of the draft rules, Mr. Munshi mentioned that the Committee had changed the nomenclature of the permanent Chairman into President who would be the guardian of the privileges of the Assembly, its spokesman and its representative and its highest executive authority. The Assembly would have five Vice-Presidents of whom, two would be elected and the remaining three would be elected Chairmen of the three sections who would be ex-officio Vice-Presidents. In regard to quorum, the draft rules provided that two-fifths of the members be present both in the Union Assembly and in its branches and in the settling of the Provincial Constitution the required quorum was two-fifths of the representatives of the respective provinces.

The business of the House would be transacted in Hindi, Urdu or English and records would be kept in all the three languages.

Rules relating to the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights and minorities and in regard to references to the Federal Court were on the lines contained in the State Paper.

The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee proposed in one of the rules would be a Central Co-ordinating Committee as between the Assembly and its sections, between sections and sections as also between the President and the House. It would, if possible, by the assent of the parties strive for "composite motions and amendments" Provision had been made for the setting up of a Staff and Finance Committee, a Credentials Committee, the Election Tribunal. etc. In regard to the work of the Election Tribunal which would be appointed by the President, Mr. Munshi said that in order to give effect to any adjudication it was felt that it could be done only by an Ordinance so that it could form part of the law. It was therefore proposed to move the appropriate authorities to pass the necessary Ordinance for any election tribunal that might be set up.

Mr. Munshi proceeded to explain another rule under which the whole country including the Indian States would have an opportunity to study the draft of the constitution to be framed. The relevant portion of the rules in this regard reads: "The Assembly shall before finally setting the Union constitution, give an opportunity to the several Provinces and States through their Legislatures, to formulate within such time as it may fix, their views upon the resolutions of the Assembly outlining the main features of the constitution, or if the Assembly so decides, upon a preliminary draft of the constitution."

In regard to provincial constitutions, it was prescribed that before they were finally settled, an opportunity should be given to the provinces to formulate their views on the preliminary decisions of the Sections concerned as to whether a Group constitution shall be set up for the provinces and with what provincial subjects the Group constitution should deal.

"The Constituent Assembly shall not be dissolved except by resolution of the Assembly or by at least two-thirds of the whole number of members of the Assembly," said another rule.

The Assembly adjourned and met again at 3 p.m. *in camera*. It met again on the 22nd. *in camera* to continue discussion on the Draft Rules and Procedure framed by the Procedure Committee.

Preliminary Meeting Adjourned—23rd. December

A Press Note issued on the 23rd. December announced the adjournment of the preliminary meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

It said: The preliminary meeting of the Constituent Assembly which began on 9th December has been adjourned to 20th January. This was announced by the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad at the afternoon session to-day. The committee of the whole House having considered the Rules of Procedure, a plenary session of the Assembly was held and the Rules as passed by the Committee were adopted. A few rules and amendments raising important issues have been held over for discussion at the adjourned session in January.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad announced that no notice of any resolution had been received about reference to the Federal Court on the interpretation of the Grouping Clause in the State Paper of May 16 and, therefore, this question would not be taken up.

The Press Note goes on: The following three Committees were elected: 1, The Credentials Committee: Sir Alladi Krishnawami Aiyar, Bakshi Sir Tek Chand Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr. P. K. Sen and Mr. Frank Antony.

2. Staff and Finance Committee: Mr. Satyanarain Sinha, Mr. Jaipal Singh, Mr. V. I. Muniswamy Pillai Mr. O. R. Gibbon Mr. N. V. Gadgil, Seth Govind Das, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mr. Sri Prakash and Sardar Harnam Singh.

3. The House Committee: Mr. Radhanath Das, Mr. A. K. Das, Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram. Mr. Nandkishore Das. Mr. Mohanlal Saxena, Mr. H. V. Kamath, Mr. R. R. Diwakar, Mrs. Ammu Swaminathan. There was no contest for any of the places in the Committee.

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